

LIFE OF ROBERT GATE.

The Christian Patriarch.

THE LIFE OF MR. ROBERT GATE,

WITH

*SOME NOTICES OF EARLY METHODISM
IN THE PENRITH CIRCUIT.*

BY

GEO. G. S. THOMAS.

“ Always abounding in the work of the Lord.”

LONDON :
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW
1869.

TO
The Committee of the Penrith Auxiliary
OF THE
BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY,
AND TO THE
WESLEYAN LOCAL PREACHERS AND CLASS-LEADERS
OF THE PENRITH CIRCUIT,
THIS MEMOIR OF AN OLD AND FAITHFUL FELLOW-LABOURER
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

THE lives of *great men*, as such, may command the admiration of the masses of the people, but as *examples* they are of service only to few; and, therefore, the lives of men who, whilst possessing but *ordinary abilities*, were *extraordinarily useful*, are calculated in general to do the greater amount of good. The subject of this memoir was not endowed with any uncommon gifts either of nature or providence, being possessed of but average abilities, and having had during the greater part of his life to work hard for his living; yet he accomplished a vast amount of good, and his life is placed before the Christian public—not as something beyond their reach merely to be admired, but for imitation. He is worthy of note, not for the possession of great talents, but for the judicious and unwearied employment of such as he had, and Christians of but ordinary abilities and opportunities for doing good may be directed to his example with the injunction, “Go thou and do likewise.”

The generation that knew Mr. Gate in the prime of his manhood has passed away, and as he but seldom spoke of himself and kept no journal, it has been difficult to gather information concerning him. Had he kept a journal, many interesting circumstances might undoubtedly have been inserted in this little volume that are to be found only in the records of heaven.

The writer sincerely hopes that the example set forth in the following pages may suggest fresh modes of usefulness to the reader, and stimulate him to greater diligence in the work of the Lord.

G. G. S. T.

EASINGWOLD,

Nov. 20th, 1868.

CONTENTS.



CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
BIRTH AND PARENTAGE—EARLY TRAINING—APPRENTICESHIP AT PENRITH—RESIDENCE AT DURHAM—SEEKING PEACE AND FINDING NONE—ATTENDS A METHODIST CHAPEL—THE REV. JOHN BRAITHWAITE—MEETS IN CLASS—RETURNS HOME—FINDS PEACE—THE FIRST NIGHT AT HIS FATHER'S HOUSE—DISCOURAGEMENT—FIRST-FRUTTS	1

CHAPTER II.

PENRITH—MR. WESLEY'S VISITS TO THE TOWN AND NEIGHBOURHOOD—THE REV. JOSEPH BENSON—MR. VARTY—MISS BOSANQUET—THE ASSEMBLY ROOM CONVERTED INTO A PREACHING PLACE—EARLY METHODISM IN PENRITH—MR. GATE UNITES WITH THE SOCIETY AND BEGINS TO PREACH	26
---	----

CHAPTER III.

MR. GATE BECOMES ENGAGED—SUITABLE CHOICE—MR. JAMES BARRY, OF DURHAM—MARRIAGE—THE NEW HOME—APPOINTED LEADER—DEATH OF MR. VARTY—HIS CHARACTER AND LIBERALITY—THE ERECTION OF THE SANDGATE HEAD CHAPEL	42
---	----

CHAPTER IV.

	PAGE
MR. GATE BECOMES A LOCAL PREACHER—HIS UNSECTARIAN SPIRIT AND ATTACHMENT TO METHODISM—PREACHING, A CROSS AND A PLEASURE—HARD WORK—COLD RECEPTIONS—PREPARATION FOR THE PULPIT—CONSISTENCY OF HIS LIFE—STYLE—COWPER—FAVOURITE THEMES—THE LABOURER OF FOURSORE YEARS—THE OPINION OF A CHURCHMAN	56

CHAPTER V.

THE METHODIST CLASS MEETING—MR. GATE AS A LEADER—USEFULNESS—TESTIMONY OF MR. JOHN MAWSON—MR. GATE'S ACTIVE INTEREST IN SUNDAY SCHOOLS—ORIGIN AND PROSPERITY OF THE MEETING-HOUSE LANE SUNDAY SCHOOL—THE RAGGED SCHOOL—THE TRACT SOCIETY—THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY—LETTER OF THE REV. T. R. MOXON—THE BIBLE SOCIETY	80
---	----

CHAPTER VI.

MR. GATE AS A VISITOR OF THE SICK—HIS SELF-DENYING LIBERALITY—THE GOOD SAMARITAN SOCIETY—ADVANTAGES OF SUCH AN INSTITUTION—RETIREMENT FROM BUSINESS—A PROVIDENTIAL CIRCUMSTANCE—EXTENT OF VISITATION—GOLDSMITH—EXTRACT FROM THE HISTORY OF PENRITH — INSTANCES OF USEFULNESS — A DAUGHTER'S GRATITUDE FOR HER MOTHER'S CONVERSION	95
---	----

CHAPTER VII.

	PAGE
THE ESTEEM IN WHICH MR. GATE WAS HELD—TESTIMONIES OF THE REV. ADAM FLETCHER, G. C. HODGSON, AND JOHN DAYMAN, M.A.—PRESENTATION AT THE JUBILEE OF THE PENRITH BRANCH OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY, AND THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN SO- CIETY—A HAPPY OLD AGE—LETTER FROM MRS. PALMER (OF AMERICA)—LAST LABOURS AND RESULTS—CONFINE- MENT TO THE HOUSE, AND DEATH	120

CHAPTER VIII.

GENERAL REGRET ON ACCOUNT OF MR. GATE'S DEATH— EXTRACT FROM THE PENRITH OBSERVER—FUNERAL— NOTICES OF HIS DEATH AND CHARACTER IN THE BIBLE SOCIETY'S REPORTS—RESOLUTION OF THE LEADERS' MEETING—LETTERS FROM THE REV. JOHN HANNAH AND T. T. DILKS—CHARACTER	143
---	-----

APPENDIX.

THE BROUH CIRCUIT, PLACES AND CONTRIBUTIONS IN 1803 AND 1806—THE FORMATION OF THE PENRITH CIRCUIT —MISSION WORK—THE BROUH AND PENRITH CIRCUIT IN 1819—THE PENRITH CIRCUIT IN 1826, 1846, AND 1866—LIST OF MINISTERS WHO HAVE BEEN APPOINTED TO THE PENRITH CIRCUIT.	159
--	-----

THE LIFE OF ROBERT GATE.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND PARENTAGE—EARLY TRAINING—APPRENTICESHIP AT PENRITH—RESIDENCE AT DURHAM—SEEKING PEACE AND FINDING NONE—ATTENDS A METHODIST CHAPEL—THE REV. JOHN BRAITHWAITE—MEETS IN CLASS—RETURNS HOME—FINDS PEACE—THE FIRST NIGHT AT HIS FATHER'S HOUSE—DISCOURAGEMENT—FIRST-FRUITs.

AT the foot of Saddleback, on the southern side, in the midst of the wild and picturesque Cumbrian group of mountains, is situated the quiet hamlet of Scales, the birthplace of *Robert Gate*, who was born on the 9th of January, 1780.

Mr. Joseph Gates,* the father of Robert, was a respectable yeoman, farming his own land, and was therefore what is called in Cumberland a *statesman*. He appears to have been a man of good moral character, honest and upright, having the confidence and esteem of his neighbours. He and his wife regularly attended their parish (Threlkeld)

* We know not why Robert dropped the s, which formed part of his father's name ; when a boy he used to sign himself Gates.

church, and taught their children to follow their example.

At that time religion was in a low and lifeless state in Cumberland; the doctrine generally preached in the churches and received by the people, being that a belief in the Bible, attendance at church, and a moral life, were all that God required of man, and all that was necessary to *merit* heaven—a doctrine that for the most part had but little influence upon the lives of either preachers or people: whilst the necessity of regeneration, justification by faith, and the witness of the Spirit were seldom if ever referred to.

In this cold heartless system of religion—a religion of works without faith; of merit without grace, and of form without power—was Mr. Joseph Gates brought up; it had been the religion of his ancestors, and in the same did his children receive their early training. A child that knew a little of the Bible, learned his Catechism, and went to church, was all that could be desired—such a child was Robert Gate.

As soon as he was old enough, Robert was sent to the village school, which at that time was taught by the Rev. Mr. Harrison, curate of the parish, who seems to have taken a special interest

in his young pupil. Mr. Gates, undoubtedly influenced by Robert's godfather—the Rev. Mr. Asbridge—intended that he should be a clergyman; he therefore kept him almost constantly at school (a benefit seldom in those days conferred by farmers upon their sons); sometimes, however, he had to attend to his father's sheep on Saddleback, instead.

He continued going to school till he was about fourteen years of age, when his father's intention of making him a clergyman had to be given up, on account of his disinclination to learn Latin.

During this period he often felt the strivings of the Holy Spirit: one instance he never forgot—he and one of his sisters were playing together in the barn, when they happened to disagree, and he in a moment of anger struck her; instantly he was deeply convinced of his having done wrong, and falling upon his knees, said his prayers.

In the sixteenth year of his age he was apprenticed to Mr. William Bateman, saddler, of Penrith, for the term of seven years. Robert was now placed in a very perilous position, for he lodged with his master, who at that time kept the Sun Inn, and who, although he professed to be a staunch Churchman, and bore a good reputation,

was by no means a man of strict religious principles. In after years Mr. Gate occasionally took a walk to the Thulbar Fields (a little out of the town) to see the place to which his master used sometimes to send him to dig potatoes on a Sunday morning for the day's dinner!

As an apprentice, he was diligent, obedient, and trustworthy, and in consequence often had work allotted to him which others would not do. His hours of work were long—being generally from five in the morning to seven in the evening.

Notwithstanding that his home was in a public house, with all its evil influences and temptations, and in a town which at that time was notorious for its immorality, he was graciously saved, during the whole of his apprenticeship, from making companions of the openly ungodly, and from running into any excesses, and he continued to follow the example of his parents in regular attendance at church.

As might be expected, he had some associates of about his own age, with whom he joined in such boyish frolics as did not appear to him to be very wicked. One of their favourite diversions was to annoy the Methodists, who in those days were but few, and those few very much persecuted. The

impression Robert had received of these people was that they were eccentric, weak-minded enthusiasts, and believing that reason and religion were to be found only in “the Church of England as by law established,” he thought there could be no harm in persecuting them. On one occasion whilst the Methodists were holding service in an upper room, a number of boys, of whom Robert was one, gathered together about the door, locked it, took out the key, and blew asafoetida through the key-hole for the purpose of annoying those inside !

Robert’s first impressions of the Methodists were certainly not very favourable, neither was his treatment of them very friendly, and judging of him, by his bearing towards them during the term of his apprenticeship—he appears nearly as unlikely to become a leader among them, as was Saul to become the Apostle of the Gentiles.

After the expiration of his apprenticeship he remained a few months with Mr. Bateman, with the intention of taking the business, but failing to come to terms, he left Penrith, and spent the following eighteen months at Stockton, Yarm, Easingwold, Thirsk and London. He then returned home, and after spending a short time at Penrith, went to reside at Durham in the year 1803.

For some time before this, he had become very anxious about the welfare of his soul, he felt that he was unsaved, and therefore in danger of being eternally lost, and when thoughts of death and judgment came unbidden into his mind, he quaked for fear. He had hoped that time and freer intercourse with the world would enable him to banish such gloomy thoughts, and hush the voice of an awakened conscience. Wherefore when he went to Durham, he began to attend races, and to engage in other amusements, but worldly pleasure failed to give him that which he panted after—*rest for his soul*; the secret warning voice was still heard, and rising thoughts of eternity still tormented him; his soul was in bitterness; and he felt as though God were saying to him, “And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind; and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shall fear day and night, and shall have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even; and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning; for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou

shall see." In after years he frequently referred to the misery he felt when attending the races, and other places of amusement. The very means by which he had hoped to find peace and comfort, added to his wretchedness.

And do not all men at some period in their lives feel the same? Real misery is often to be found in the midst of scenes of gaiety and mirth; and to feel the pangs of an accusing conscience seems to be the lot of *all*, for there is a light, "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." But alas! "men love darkness rather than light."

Notwithstanding that Robert was seeking rest in the world, he continued regularly to attend church on Sundays. After failing to find happiness in the pursuit of worldly pleasures, he made up his mind to seek for it in religion. Up to this period he had been in the habit of making up his master's books on Sundays, but now being convinced that in doing so he was transgressing the law of God, he resolved that for the future, he would keep holy the Sabbath day. When he told his master of the resolution he had formed, he was very much displeased, and tried to dissuade him from carrying it out; but Robert's mind was made up, for he feared the anger of God more than the displeasure of his

master. He went to church Sabbath after Sabbath, with the determination to find out if possible an answer to the question, which had given him great anxiety, “What must I do to be saved?” Receiving no light or comfort from what he heard in the parish church, he went from one church to another, in great distress about his soul, hoping at last to find out *how* he was “to flee from the wrath to come.”

He often went to the churchyard to meditate and pray, and at times would kneel down behind a gravestone, and weep and pray on account of his sins. He frequently fasted, and his Sundays were almost wholly devoted to seeking pardon; even the hours in which he had been wont to take his meals were spent in prayer. He could truly say with David, “My heart is smitten and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread . . . because of Thine indignation and Thy wrath.” So much anxiety and fasting were more than his constitution could endure, his health in consequence gave way. Nevertheless he was still in darkness, and ignorant of the plan of salvation. He keenly felt his danger, but knew not the way of escape.

He lodged with a widow named Mary Robinson, who was a regular hearer at the Wesleyan chapel.

Life of Mr. Robert Gate.

Durham at that time (1803) was in the Sunderland circuit, and had no resident Wesleyan minister. The superintendent of the circuit was the Rev. John Braithwaite, whose labours were abundantly blessed at Durham, as well as at the other places under his care. Whenever he preached the chapels were crowded, and through his instrumentality a great many sinners were converted from the error of their ways. He was a holy man, and a most successful preacher.

Mrs. Robinson was an ardent admirer of Mr. Braithwaite's preaching, and thought that no one could go to hear him without receiving good, and that “he converted all before him!” She was therefore very zealous in inviting all she knew to go to hear him. Amongst the rest, she asked her young lodger, Robert Gate, to go; but his prejudices against the Methodists were just as strong then as they were in the days of his apprenticeship, so that it was no easy task to persuade him to go to hear one of their preachers. Indeed, at that time he thought it was wrong to attend any place of worship besides the church; for, to use his own words, he “*believed that none other was right*”—that salvation could be obtained only within her pale. However, the old woman continued to

urge him to go to hear Mr. Braithwaite, telling him of many, who, although they were once as wretched as he, had been made happy through his instrumentality.

At last he decided to go once, and hear for himself; and he went, earnestly desiring, though not expecting, to obtain some light and comfort. What a change was produced in the views and feelings of Robert Gate during that service! As he listened to the preacher he was led to feel himself a sinner as he had never felt before, and to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Heretofore he had looked upon God as a God of justice, who was angry with him, and his distress had arisen merely from the fear of His wrath; but now with a *contrite* heart, he views Him also as a God full of loving kindness and tender mercy, Whom he had been *grieving* by by his sin.

Before this he felt he was a sinner, but thought that future obedience could atone for past transgressions; that fasting, prayer, and moral rectitude could merit pardon for past offences; but now he sees that, could he spend a life of entire, unvarying devotion and self-denial, it could not atone for a single sin; and his hopes of saving himself by performing the deeds of the law are

scattered to the winds. The language of his heart is—

“ What have I then wherein to trust?
I nothing have, I nothing am ;
Excluded is my every boast,
My glory swallow'd up in shame.”

As he listens to the word preached, tears of genuine repentance steal down his face, and he sees and feels that if he is to be saved, it must be by *the grace of God*.

When Mr. Gate left that meeting his hope of pardon was not perhaps very bright, but he had however the satisfaction of having learned *how* it was to be obtained, namely by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He was now in the twenty-fifth year of his age. He had for some time been one of the military volunteers, and had gone to the service above referred to in his uniform, but he at once resigned his connection with them, because he feared it would hinder him in his pursuit of that which he desired above all things to obtain—the salvation of his soul. He had already ceased to attend places of public amusement, and now he withdrew from all ungodly company. This was a decided and important step. He felt that he had enough to do

to resist the devil without throwing himself into the way of temptation, by associating with the ungodly ; so he attended to the counsel of the Wise man, “ My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not . . . Walk not thou in the way with them ; refrain thy foot from their path ; ” and he no longer walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners.

His prejudices against Methodism were entirely removed, and from that time he became a regular and an attentive hearer at the Wesleyan chapel, and sought the companionship of such only as were, like himself, endeavouring to flee from the wrath to come. Some of his friends invited him to unite himself with the people of God, and to seek such instruction and encouragement as a Methodist class-meeting would afford ; this, however, he was at first unwilling to do, as, in consequence of his natural reserve, joined to his church training, he did not like the idea of speaking of the state of his mind in the presence of others. But after ineffectually seeking pardon for several months, he was induced to cast in his lot amongst the Methodists, and went to the class-meeting, where, breaking through his reserve, he spoke freely of his doubts, hopes and fears. He received

his ticket of admission on trial for membership in the month of July, 1805, from the Rev. John Farrar, father of the present Rev. John Farrar, Secretary of the Conference.

Although he obtained much light and comfort from the judicious counsel of his leader, Mr. John Sowerby, and from the experience of his classmates, yet he remained without the assurance of the pardon of his sins, for nearly two years after he had joined the society. There was no need for him, being a penitent seeker after salvation, to have remained so long without the consciousness of pardon; he might have believed and been saved long before, had he not given way to his doubting, timorous disposition. The hindrance was not in God but in himself. As soon as the repenting sinner believes with his heart on the Lord Jesus, relying implicitly upon the merits of His death, he obtains the forgiveness of sin.

Mr. Gate was never of a hopeful, buoyant disposition; through the whole of his life his mind tended to view the dark rather than the bright side of things; and though this tendency saved him from many a disappointment, through events turning out better than he had expected, yet it cost him much needless anxiety, and the loss of many a happy hour.

The wily adversary of souls ever studies, and takes advantage of, a man's natural disposition, bringing his influence to bear upon it—the hopeful he would encourage on to presumption, whilst the timid and desponding he would terrify into despair. Satan saw too well wherein Robert's weakness lay, and therefore busied himself in magnifying difficulties, raising doubts, and creating fears in his mind ; he “desired to have him that he might sift him as wheat,” and he knew that could he but persuade him, that there was *no hope of forgiveness for him*, he would be sure of his victim.

The evil one suits his temptations, not only to a man's natural disposition, but also to the present state of his mind. For a long time he had endeavoured to quiet Robert's fears, to keep his eyes closed to his danger, and to soothe him to sleep ; but now that his prey had been awakened, and saw and felt his danger, all the powers of darkness conspire to terrify him ; and that same voice which before had said, “Peace, peace,” and had given assurance of security, is now heard declaring, “Thou canst not be saved, thou hast sinned too much and too long ; there is no hope for thee !”

Oh ! what sympathy and encouragement do

awakened sinners need, especially those who are struggling in the “Slough of Despond.”

His was a long and severe conflict with Satan; during these two years the enemy often thrust hard at him, and often was he brought to the verge of despair. At times he felt himself to be near the kingdom of God—another step, only another—and again doubts and fears crowded upon him, and his salvation appeared to be no nearer than when he began. Now, rays of light would steal into his soul, “like,” to use his own expression, “the light of a farthing candle,” again came darkness, thick darkness that could be felt. Like a shipwrecked mariner, he struggled hard for life, ever and anon a kindly, hopeful billow bore him almost to the shore, when his doubts and fears again laying hold of him, would, like a receding tide, carry him back into the deep. But the time of his redemption was drawing nigh; his night of sorrow had been long and dark, but the morning of joy was at hand.

As soon as he was convinced of the importance of religion and the necessity of regeneration, he began to feel anxious about the salvation of others, especially those of his own family. He repeatedly wrote to his parents, brother, and sisters, urging

them to join with him in seeking the Lord. He was in earnest about his own soul, and he prayed that God would open their eyes, and cause them to be anxious about their souls.

In the year 1806 he left Durham, where he had resided three years—to him a memorable period—with the intention of entering into business for himself at Penrith. In the meantime he returned home to spend a few days with his friends. He first went to the house of his uncle, Mr. William Jaques (which was two miles from Scales) where he spent a night and part of the following day. He arose very early in the morning of that day, as usual, for the purpose of continuing his prayers and supplications to Almighty God for the pardon of his sins. Whilst thus engaged, the words addressed by our Lord to Thomas, were forcibly brought to his mind — “Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into My side, AND BE NOT FAITHLESS BUT BELIEVING.” Unbelief had been his stumbling-block, the hindrance to his obtaining salvation; all his *fears* had been occasioned by his *doubts*, and he had failed to enter into his rest “because of unbelief.” He felt that he deserved his Lord’s kind reproof,

and through grace he was enabled then to cry, “Lord, I believe,” and by faith to approach Him, saying, “*My Lord and my God.*” His doubts and fears instantly vanished, and light, clear and joyous streamed into his soul. He went to Christ weary and heavy laden, and he found *rest*. The raging storm within heard the command of Jesus, “Peace, be still,” and there was a great calm. And now he who had so long wavered and doubted, is using the words of faith and assurance—words he had often read, but whose truth he had never experienced before—words now applied with power by the Holy Spirit to his mind: “**THERE IS NOW, THEREFORE, NO CONDEMNATION TO THEM WHICH ARE IN CHRIST JESUS**”—cheering words—“*In Christ Jesus*”—“*No condemnation!*” Sin, divested of its power, death of its sting, judgment of its terror! He now feels that he is a child of God, having received the spirit of adoption, whereby he can cry, *Abba Father*. His prayer is turned into a song of praise and thanksgiving, and the language of his heart is: “O Lord I will praise Thee; though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me.”

Although he had struggled hard and long to obtain the blessing of pardon, and highly prized

the boon when he received it, yet he was not the subject of those overwhelming emotions of joy which some in similar circumstances have experienced. His were feelings of perfect peace, of calm delight, and real happiness.

As soon as he was made a partaker of the saving grace of God, he wished to go and tell others what the Lord had done for his soul, and having found the Christ Himself he was anxious to bring others to Him. Happy in the newly found favour of his God he could cry—

“ Oh ! that the world might taste and see
The riches of His grace,
The arms of love that compass me
Would all mankind embrace.”

The first person he had the opportunity of speaking to about the Lord’s doings with him was his uncle, to whom he gave an account of the anxiety and wretchedness he had so long endured, and of the peace and joy he then experienced through believing.

In the evening of the same day he went on to his father’s house, where all had been looking forward with pleasure to his return home. In those days, when in country places a newspaper, or a letter from a distance, was almost a curiosity,

and but few persons went many miles from home, it can easily be conceived that very little of the outer world was known at Scales, and that Mr. Joseph Gates and family would be expecting to hear much of what Robert had seen and heard during his three years' absence from home that would interest them. He, however, was not in the best frame of mind for gratifying their curiosity. The most important and happy circumstance that had befallen him, was that of his obtaining the forgiveness of his sins ; this was uppermost in his mind, the chief subject of his thoughts, and he could not refrain from speaking about it.

“ His heart was full of Christ, and longed its glorious matter to declare.” Wherefore he did not tell them, as much as they expected, of general news, and things of mere worldly interest ; but he told them a great deal about his spiritual interests that they neither expected nor desired to hear. His greatest anxiety had been about his soul, his greatest sorrow had been on account of sin, and his greatest joy had that morning been produced by the remission of his sins, and the assurance of the Divine favour, and he could not forbear telling them of these things. So in his simple earnest manner he told them of the misery

he had felt when convinced of sin by the Spirit of God ; his vainly trying to find rest in worldly amusements, and as vainly trying to atone for his sins by good works ; and then, with emotions of holy joy and fervent gratitude, he spoke of the light he had received from the preaching of the Word in a Methodist chapel, the blessed assurance of pardon he had obtained through the exercise of faith in Christ Jesus, and the happiness he then possessed. But as what he had said was not favourably received, he asked for a Bible and read to them (undoubtedly such portions as bore upon the subjects of regeneration and salvation by faith), endeavouring to show that his had been “words of truth and soberness.”

As might be anticipated, they were by no means pleased with the turn the conversation had taken ; they were grieved and disappointed, and when the ardent young disciple said he would pray with them, his father and brother (John) left in anger and went to bed ; his mother and sisters remained, but only one of them (his sister Anne) would kneel down whilst he engaged in prayer. Soon after prayer was over his sisters retired for the night, but his mother stayed up a little longer, to converse with him alone ; not that she wanted to hear

more of his religious views and experience, but she wished to expostulate with him about his "*new notions.*" She told him that she was displeased with him, that she had no objection to his being religious, but that she could not understand why he, who had been brought up in the Church of England, and whose forefathers had been staunch Churchmen, should become a *Methodist*, a member of that sect "*everywhere spoken against!*" When he went to bed he overheard his mother and sister Anne talking ; they were evidently very much concerned about him. Anne said, "I wonder what has come over Robert to make him read, and talk and pray as he does now," to which his mother replied, "I fear that he is going out of his mind ! "

What a trying position for so sensitive a person and so young a Christian ! His newly found faith was soon severely tested ; his persecution began on the first day of his Christian life, and in the most trying place—*home*. "It was not an *enemy* that reproached him ; then he could have borne it ;" but his first "*foes were they of his own household.*" He had no one near to counsel or encourage him, but he had to stand *alone* and bear the reproach of his own parents. He was a dutiful

son, and deeply loved his father and mother, and, therefore, could not but be grieved in consequence of their displeasure. Nevertheless, he knew that his Lord had said, “He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.” The path of duty was plain, though difficult; he must obey Christ, even though his parents oppose him.

That was a memorable day to Robert Gate,—it began, as many before it had, with continued sorrow for sin and prayer for pardon; then came the happy moment of his deliverance and his first love; in the evening he declared to them at home what the Lord had done for him, when he met with parental displeasure and opposition; yet the young Christian wavered not, for though he had no earthly friend near, to talk to about these new trials, God spoke to him and said, “Fear not, for I am with thee;” “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;” and he went to sleep cheered by the assurance that he was *not alone*, for *God was with him*, and that greater was He that was for him than any that were against him. Thus ended the first day of his Christian experience.

The immediate result of his conversation with his parents, brother, and two sisters, did not appear encouraging, but he had begun to walk by

faith and not by sight, to expect that in answer to prayer good would be done, though there was no sign of good doing, and he hoped and earnestly prayed that “the bread cast upon the waters” might be found again.

At first it might have grieved him to find that his religious views and zeal were looked upon as the result of an affection of the mind, yet he could not but be comforted by his knowledge of the fact, that many earnest Christians before him had been accounted fools for Christ's sake, that St. Paul, and even our Lord Himself were charged with madness. But they were soon convinced that if Robert's mind was affected, it was by light divine, a light that affected his heart also.

Mark the happy result of that young Christian's exhortations and prayers. Not many weeks after, *his brother, his two sisters (Anne and Sarah), and then his mother, were all savingly converted to God, and became members of the Methodist Society.* It does not appear that his father ever united himself with the Methodists, but for many years he cordially entertained their preachers, his house being their home when in that neighbourhood.

At the time of Robert's memorable visit to his home, there were no Wesleyans in that locality;

but when he went to reside at Penrith, which was soon after, he prevailed upon the ministers there to have preaching at Wallthwaite, a village near Scales; he then succeeded in persuading his mother, brother, and sisters to attend, soon after which they united themselves to the Methodist society at that place. Scales has now a Wesleyan chapel, and appears on the plan of the Cocker-mouth and Keswick Circuit.

Robert's long career of usefulness was commenced *at home*, among the members of his *own household*. His labour there, with its ultimate success, must have had an influence for good upon the whole of his after-life. He had learned not to be discouraged by opposing circumstances, but, trusting in God, to do his duty, leaving results with Him. Often when tempted to lose heart, in after years, when he saw no fruit to his labours, would his thoughts revert to the occasion of his first efforts, and the happy though not immediate success which followed them.

It may be well to notice in this place that his mother (who died in the year 1829, in the eighty-third year of her age), remained “faithful unto death.” During the latter years of her life the Bible became increasingly precious to her, and

was her almost constant study, and she died in the full assurance of faith.

Robert outlived his brother and sisters, and had the happiness of knowing that they also endured to the end, retaining their love to Christ and their connection with Methodism to the last.

And now all the members of that family circle that we noticed at the old farm-house at Scales have passed away to the eternal world, *but never will ROBERT GATE regret the effort he made for the salvation of the rest; that effort, though at the time trying to him, and displeasing to them, will be a SOURCE OF JOY FOR EVER!*

Christian! do thy duty; begin with those of thine own household. “Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee.” Remember that the Apostles of our Lord were commanded to begin their ministry at Jerusalem, among their own people. Take up thy cross, be not discouraged by opposition, labour diligently, pray earnestly and believably, and *thy labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.* Let the admonition given to this young disciple influence thee in doing good, as it did in obtaining mercy—“*Be not faithless but believing,*” and “according to thy faith so shall it be done unto thee.”

CHAPTER II.

PENRITH—MR. WESLEY'S VISITS TO THE TOWN AND NEIGHBOURHOOD—THE REV. JOSEPH BENSON—MR. VARTY—MISS BOSANQUET—THE ASSEMBLY ROOM CONVERTED INTO A PREACHING PLACE—EARLY METHODISM IN PENRITH—MR. GATE UNITES WITH THE SOCIETY AND BEGINS TO PREACH.

IN the month of October, 1806, Mr. Gate went to reside at Penrith, where he commenced business for himself, and where he spent the remainder of his life.

The town of Penrith, which is eighteen miles south of Carlisle, is situated in the midst of scenery which for variety and beauty is perhaps unsurpassed in England. It commands a view of Crossfell twelve miles eastward, Saddleback fourteen miles westward, Helvellyn sixteen miles south-westward, and other mountains of less note. From the hill (the Beacon) upon which part of the town stands, may be seen the lake Ullswater, sheltered on either side by high and rugged mountains five miles distant, Brougham Hall one and a half miles, and the stately castle of Lowther five miles distant, with other places of interest.

The town appears to have been one of historical importance prior to the introduction of Christianity into Britain, and it has figured conspicuously in many momentous events in the history of this country. The old church, which is dedicated to St. Andrew, was annexed to the see of Carlisle by Henry the First, A.D. 1133. A weekly market and an annual fair were established there by order of Henry the Third, A.D. 1222. The present population of the town is nearly 8,000, but at the beginning of this century it was not more than half that number.

It has been already noticed that there were Methodists in Penrith when Mr. Gate was an apprentice, but it is not known exactly at what time the society was formed there. From Mr. Wesley's Journal it appears that he first visited the parts of Cumberland and Westmorland, which now constitute the Penrith Circuit, on Friday, September 29th, 1749, when on his way from Hinely Hill to Whitehaven he spent the night at Gamblesby. On April 18th, 1751, he again visited Gamblesby, and preached in the school-room "to as many serious people as it would contain." It is probable that a society was formed either at Gamblesby or Melmerby (at which members from both places

would meet) about that time. Although it does not appear that Mr. Wesley ever preached at Melmerby, yet the society seems to have met there from its formation up to about the time (1778 or 1780) of the erection of the chapel at Gamblesby, when the latter place was entered in the circuit (Barnard Castle) books, and the former was dropped.

The contributions of the Melmerby Society to the Quarter Board for the Midsummer quarter in 1768, was 14s. 6d.; the number of members in 1770 was thirty-one. One of the members of this society in 1765 was JOSEPH BENSON, then in the eighteenth year of his age, who afterwards rose to great eminence as a scholar and divine.*

* Joseph Benson was born at Melmerby (Cumberland) on the 25th of January, 1748. His parents went to reside at Huddlescough, near Renwick, the following year, which accounts for the fact that many in that locality suppose it to have been his birthplace. After acquiring the rudiments of learning at the village school, he studied Latin and Greek under the tuition of the Rev. Mr. Dean, Presbyterian Minister of Park Head, a gentleman of whose abilities he ever entertained a high opinion. In his youth, as in after years, Mr. Benson had an insatiable thirst for knowledge, he was a most diligent student, and sacrificed many comforts and boyish amusements for the sake of increasing his learning. He remained under Mr. Dean's tuition till he was about sixteen years of age, when he became a teacher in a school at Gamblesby. Referring to this period of his life, he writes: "When I was about sixteen years of age, it pleased God

On Wednesday, May 27th, 1752, Mr. Wesley preached at Clifton, near Penrith, “to a civil people who looked just as if he had been talking Greek.” Whether he preached at Penrith the same day or not does not appear from his Journal, it is not unlikely that he did, and that he remained there over the night; he had *friends* there as appears from the following entry:—

by means of conversation with a cousin of [mine Joseph Watson, who was about his own age, and who afterwards became a useful local preacher] to convince me that I was not in His favour, since I did not know my sins were pardoned. I was more and more deeply made sensible of my alienation from God, by continuing to hear the Methodists, with whom I was united, and was in great disquietude and distress almost continually, for about ten months, till the Lord gave me to believe in His Son, and shed abroad His love in my heart.” His position at that time was a very trying one, for his opportunities of hearing and conversing with the Methodist preachers were but few, and his enquiring mind thirsted for more instruction in divine things than he could obtain at Gamblesby, the society was small and very much persecuted, and his father strongly disapproved of his connection with it. In the month of December, 1765, (when nearly eighteen years of age) acting upon the advice of Messrs. Rankin and Hopper, preachers of Mr. Wesley’s, he left home for Newcastle, to wait upon Mr. Wesley and to make his case known to him, but on reaching the place of his destination, he found to his great disappointment, that he had left for London. Mr. Benson then went on to London where he had the satisfaction of meeting with Mr. Wesley, who appointed him classical master of Kingswood School, on March 11th, 1766.

In 1771, he became one of Mr. Wesley’s regular preachers, and in 1798 and 1810, he was elected President of the Methodist Conference.

“ Monday, July 30th, 1766. About two we reached Penrith (from Whitehaven), two of our friends guided us thence to Appleby, a county town worthy of Ireland, containing at least five and-twenty houses ! ” It is not likely that he preached at Penrith on that occasion, as it was a very wet day, and he went on to Arthur Johnston’s, near Brough, the same evening. Mr. Wesley did not visit this locality again till 1780,

His memorial tablet in City Road Chapel bears the following inscription :—

Sacred
To the Memory of
JOSEPH BENSON,
Who as a Christian was holy, devoted and consistent,
Learned, orthodox, and practical as a Commentator,
Zealous, laborious and faithful as a Pastor.
His public ministrations were marked by
Seriousness, accuracy and fervour,
And being accompanied by the unction of the Holy One,
For which he continued instant in prayer,
Were eminently acceptable and useful.
By manifestation of the truth commanding himself
To every man’s conscience in the sight of God,
As the messenger of Christ he persuaded men,
“ And much people was added unto the Lord,”
Having served his generation by the will of God,
He peacefully slept in Jesus, February 16th, 1821,
Aged 73 years.

The Wesleyan societies at Gamblesby and Melmerby may well be proud of the name of JOSEPH BENSON, who was one of their earliest members.

And does not the place of his birth deserve a memorial of him ?

when he writes : “ Friday, May 5th. Notice having been given without my knowledge of my preaching at Ninthead, all the leadminers that could, got together, and I declared to them ‘All things are ready ! ’ After riding over another enormous mountain, I preached at Gamblesby (as I did about thirty years ago) to a large congregation of rich and poor. The chief man of the town was formerly a local preacher, but now keeps his carriage. Has he increased in holiness as well as in wealth ? If not he has made a poor exchange.” It is said that this service was conducted on the village green, and that it was commenced by singing the second hymn in Mr. Wesley’s collection, “ Come sinners to the gospel feast,” &c. The entry in his Journal continues, “ In the evening a large upper room, designed for an assembly, was procured for me at Penrith, but several of the poor people were struck with a panic for fear the room should fall. Finding there was no remedy, I went down into the court below, and preached in great peace to a multitude of well-behaved people. The rain was suspended while I preached, but afterwards returned, and continued most of the night.”

When Mr. Wesley reached Penrith on this

occasion he was very tired, and he asked Mr. Wm. Varty, who had gone to meet him at the Old Crown Inn, how long it would be before service-time. Mr. Varty replied, "Ten minutes," when, to his astonishment, Mr. Wesley leaned back in his chair and fell fast asleep, awaking quite refreshed just in time for the service! Mr. Gate received this communication from Mr. Varty. On May 10th, 1786, Mr. Wesley "preached with much liberty" in a large room at Appleby (having arrived there at noon), and "then cheerfully went on to Penrith," where he spent the night, but it is not known whether he preached there or not on that occasion. This appears to have been his last visit to any place now in the Penrith circuit, although he afterwards visited other parts of Cumberland.

The "large upper room designed for an assembly," referred to by Mr. Wesley, as above, belonged to Mr. Wm. Varty, a highly respectable tradesman of the town. The following circumstances will explain how it was that the assembly room was converted into a preaching-place: One evening in the spring of 1776, when Mr. Varty was in Leeds, he was taking tea there with a friend of his with whom he was transacting business, who in the course of conversation asked him if he

would go to a Methodist chapel to hear a lady preach that evening. Now Mr. Varty was a staunch and consistent Churchman, and shared the prejudice, so general in those days, against the Methodists, and had no desire whatever to go to hear them. His friend was a Methodist, a fact that Mr. Varty must have been ignorant of, or he would not have expressed his opinion of them so freely as he did, his reply to the invitation being, “*A Methodist chapel!* I don’t know, I think the further we keep from that kind of people the better (!)” After further conversation, however, he consented to go, when his friend said, “Behold, how the Lord works!” The lady that Mr. Varty went that evening to hear was Miss BOSANQUET,*

* It was to this eminently holy and useful woman, whose name was *Mary*, and whose motto, encircling a cross, was “Devoted to death,” that the lamented Rev. Dr. Dodd referred, in the lines in his *Thoughts in Prison*—

“ ‘To death devote !’ Thus in the vernal bloom
Of redolent youth and beauty, on the cross
Hung high her motto ; she in *name* and *choice*
Of that far better part, like her so fam’d
In story evangelical—sweet saint,
Friend of my soul and soother of my grief.”

For several months before his execution she had held an almost weekly correspondence with him concerning his eternal interests, and there is reason to believe that her efforts were blessed to the salvation of his soul. “Her letters to him,” writes a biographer of Dr. Dodd, “afforded him peculiar comfort in his last distress.”

afterwards the wife of the Rev. John Fletcher, Vicar of Madely. The following extract from her Journal refers to the service in question, and to Mr. Varty, who afterwards pointed it out to Mr. and Mrs. Gate as having reference to himself :—

“ May 5th, 1776. I had a meeting some days ago at —, where an odd circumstance occurred ; I observed (as I was speaking on these words—‘ *The Master is come and calleth for thee* ’)—a gentleman among the congregation, who looked with great earnestness. As soon as the meeting was over I rode home, where I had not long been, till this man came after me. He is a stranger, and came into these parts about business. He felt a great alarm in his soul, and declared he had always before thought himself very righteous ; but he now feared he should go to hell, and insisted on telling me his whole life, and confessing (as he termed it) all his sins. He was very long, and I feared there was in his mind a mixture of insanity. He told me he was building a house for an assembly, but he would go home and turn it into a preaching house, if I would come and speak in it, that his neighbours might get the light he had got. I strove to prevail on him to return to the friend’s house from whence he came, and to set off the next morning for his

own country, where he told me he had a good wife and family ; but he insisted he would not leave me till he had found the Lord !

“ At length he said he felt some comfort, and would go and spend most of the night in prayer. Next morning he was more calm, and on my promising to answer him if he wrote to me, he went away. Satan made use of this occurrence to bring me into discouragement respecting public speaking. But some years after I heard a most pleasing account of this gentleman—that he had, indeed, turned his assembly-house into a Methodist preaching-house, and that himself and family were joined to the society.”

The “ pleasing account ” which Miss Bosanquet heard of Mr. Varty was correct so far, as that *he* had joined the society, and turned the assembly-room into a Methodist preaching-room. In addition to this he provided a room for the use of the preachers when they visited Penrith, and another room for class and prayer-meetings.

The building, of which these rooms formed part, had been designed for an hotel, but through hearing Miss Bosanquet preach, he changed his purpose concerning the whole, and converted the remainder of the building into shops, one of which was after-

wards occupied by Mr. Gate, when he commenced business at Penrith.

Mr. Varty, at his own expense, had the three rooms suitably fitted up for their respective purposes, and let the Methodists have them free of rent up to the time of his death, in 1814. The room designed for an assembly was furnished with seats, a pulpit, and reading-desk, and was made to look as much like the interior of a church as possible, having the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, &c., displayed on the walls. The room was not plastered till 1807, in which year the Rev. Dr. Coke visited Penrith, and preached in it five successive nights to as many rich and poor as could be crowded in. He insisted on having the room plastered at his own expense, and gave 5*l.* to Mr. Varty for that purpose.

Mr. Varty seems to have returned home from Leeds fully resolved to find out, and unite himself to, the Methodists. At that time the society in Penrith had not been formed, and the nearest was that which met at Gamblesby, ten miles distant, with which he at once identified himself—meeting in the class of Betty Benson. Notwithstanding the distance, he was seldom absent from his class, but went to it in all weathers, generally riding, but

sometimes walking. Mrs. Varty was at first very much opposed to his connection with the Methodists, against whom she was as strongly prejudiced as he had once been ; ultimately, however, her prejudices gave way, she became one of them, and for many years cordially entertained the preachers.

Besides Mr. Varty there were two or three Methodists residing in Penrith form any years before a society was formed there, but they were very poor, and their contributions to the Quarter Board were consequently small. Penrith appeared on the books of the Barnard Castle (originally the Dales) Circuit as early as 1779, when it contributed to the circuit funds 4s. 6d. per quarter. In 1780 it sent only 1s. per quarter, and for the following four years nothing. In 1785 it sent 3s. 6d., which gradually dwindled down to *sixpence per quarter* in 1778. After an interval of five years its name again appeared on the Circuit Books in 1792, when it contributed 2s. 6d., which in 1795 had decreased to *sixpence per quarter again*. From that period its contributions gradually increased from 4s. 6d. in 1796 to 11s. per quarter in 1803. In the Barnard Castle Circuit Schedule, the members at Penrith were included with those at Kirkoswald. The numbers returned for both places for 1791 and

the nine following years, were—7, 5, 7, 6, 9, 16, 10, 8, 8, and 12 respectively. It is probable that the Penrith Society was formed in the year 1796, or soon after, and that Mr. Varty was appointed the leader. At the Conference of the year 1803, Brough was detached from Barnard Castle, and was made the head of a circuit, which included Penrith, Appleby, and Keswick, with adjacent places,* having 213 members. Two ministers were appointed to labour in the new circuit, George Smith and Samuel Sewell, “of the Wetherby Circuit, if his Quarterly Meeting consent,”† which we find it did.

In 1806 Penrith was detached from Brough, and was made the head of a Circuit, with two ministers‡ and about 120 members. The town society consisted of about twenty members and was divided into two classes, both of which met on the Sunday; one of them was led by Mr. Varty, and the other by Mr. Lamonby.

At that time they had preaching on the Sunday in the afternoon and evening, and they had a prayer-meeting at nine o'clock in the morning,

* For a list of places included in the Brough Circuit at its formation, with their quarterly contributions, &c. *See Appendix.*

† *Minutes of Conference.*

‡ *See Appendix.*

after which they generally went to church. During the week they had preaching once and prayer-meetings twice.

As soon as Mr. Gate took up his abode in Penrith, he united himself with the society, meeting in the class led by Mr. Varty, who had given him a cordial welcome, and who afterwards took a kind interest in his welfare. How encouraging it is to a young Christian when, in changing the place of his abode, he meets with a hearty reception from the people with whom he is going to be associated; and how many members have been lost to Methodism in consequence of indifference on the part of other members amongst whom they had gone to reside. In consequence of the kind manner in which he was received by the Methodists at Penrith, Mr. Gate could not but feel at home amongst them at once.

In the year 1807 the Superintendent of the Circuit appointed Mr. Gate and a few others to conduct prayer-meetings in the neighbouring villages, and thereby to assist in establishing societies. These *prayer-leaders*, who were sent out two and two, were charged at first neither to preach nor to exhort, but merely to give out suitable hymns, and pray with the people.

Mr. Gate's first appointment was to Newton, where he and his colleague conducted a prayer-meeting "in a thatched house." The meeting was a good one, and at its close the people, having felt it good to be there, were unwilling to go away, and some of them requested Mr. Gate to preach to them. This he at first declined to do, both because he had not been authorised by the Superintendent to do so, and because of his timid disposition.

At length, however, the earnest entreaties of the people prevailed, and with much "fear and trembling" he spoke to them from the words, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death." That was a theme which he was well qualified by his own experience to speak from; he felt what he said, and "he spoke till he wept, and the people wept with him." His second attempt at preaching was made soon after, at the request of one of the ministers, on a week evening at the Townhead, in one of the Cockell-houses (all of which were rented and sublet by William Swales, a member of society). From that period Mr. Gate took a deep interest in that part of the town. Various circumstances soon followed his first efforts in preaching, which, joined to his own

convictions, constrained him, notwithstanding his natural diffidence, to go into the Lord's vineyard and work. The Superintendent (Mr. Hutchinson) was very kind to him, and used at times to sit with him when he was at work in his shop, giving him advice as to the composition of sermons, &c.

Among Mr. Gate's associates and fellow-labourers at that time were Mr. John Rigg (father of the Rev. J. H. Rigg, D.D.), who entered the ministry the following year, and Mr. Miles C. Dixon, who entered the ministry in 1809.

Mr. Gate was appointed to lead a class at Clifton in 1808, but he was soon after appointed to take charge of a class at Newton, when Mr. M. C. Dixon succeeded him as leader to the class at Clifton. It is most probable that Mr. Gate was the first class-leader appointed to these two places.

CHAPTER III.

MR. GATE BECOMES ENGAGED—SUITABLE CHOICE (MR. JAMES BARRY)—MARRIAGE—THE NEW HOME—APPOINTED LEADER—DEATH OF MR. VARTY—HIS CHARACTER AND LIBERALITY—THE ERECTION OF THE SANDGATE HEAD CHAPEL.

WHEN Mr. Gate resided at Durham he became acquainted with, and afterwards engaged to, Elizabeth, daughter of Mr. Ralph Davison of that city. Miss Davison had received her early training in the Church of England, of which her parents had for many years been members. About the year 1800, Mr. Davison (her father) was convinced of sin, in the cathedral, but after remaining in great anxiety about his soul for some time, he was induced by Mr. James Barry* (Mr. Davison's

* Mr. Barry, a gentleman highly respected in Durham, joined the Methodist society of that city in the year 1800, and retained his connection with it up to the time of his death in 1824. He was a class leader, several times circuit steward, superintendent of the Sunday School, and a zealous and successful visitor of the poor and the sick. A memoir of him, written by the Rev. Wm. Atherton, appeared in the *Methodist Magazine* for 1830, of which the following is an extract:—

“Mr. Barry was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ in the face of the world, but on every occasion was ready to bear his testi-

brother) to go to the Wesleyan chapel, which both he and his wife afterwards attended, and ultimately they became members of the society. Miss Davison, as well as Mr. Gate, was converted

mony to its excellency and saving power. He pleaded the cause of Methodism before the rich and elevated, nor was his devotion to its cause without use, for his joining the Methodist society in Durham, frequenting their place of worship and advocating its cause, were the means of leading many to attend the ministry of the Word, some of whom received the truth in the love thereof, and having by the will of God served their generation, have fallen asleep in Christ, while others remain respectable members, to benefit and adorn the Church... His piety was unaffected and unostentatious. He was grave, as one who lived under a consciousness of the presence of God, and who walked in the fear of offending Him, yet he was cheerful in the answer of a good conscience, and in a persuasion that his works pleased the Lord. His spirit was humble and devout, his moral principles upright and firm, his conduct circumspect, and his character uniform. He was regular in his attendance on all the ordinances of God, in which his whole manner was solemn, and his soul so fervent as not to escape the observation of those who were near him. In his religious course, in his attachment to the cause of Christ, he was steady. He never deserted the post of duty through opposition or personal offence, nor in the worst times and most trying discouragements ever withdrew his shoulder from the Ark of God ; but, in the constant use of appointed means, he did his part, and left the results to the agency of Heaven. He was a man of good report of all those who are without the pale of the Church, while those within esteemed him an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile. Hence there have been few persons whose death has been more generally regretted in the vicinity in which it occurred, for even those who could not admire him because he was a Methodist, revered him as a Christian and a man."

through the ministry of the Rev. John Braithwaite, and joined the Methodist Society in the sixteenth year of her age, receiving her ticket of admission from the Rev. William Warrener in 1803. The first time on which she saw Mr. Gate was on the occasion when he was so much affected in the Wesleyan chapel by the preaching of Mr. Braithwaite. When they became engaged, they made an agreement to spend a certain portion of time every day at noon in prayer for each other. And here Mr. Gate's love for his friends and anxiety about their souls were manifested, in that he wished Miss Davison to join him on these occasions in praying especially for their conversion, her nearest relations having been already brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. It was a great blessing to Mr. Gate that Miss Davison had united herself to the Methodist Society, and had found peace with God, before they became engaged, because she was thereby qualified to help and encourage him in his search for happiness. He had found it advantageous to give up the company of the ungodly, and it was not less so that he afterwards placed his affections upon one of decidedly religious principles; by the former act a temptation to evil was avoided, and by the latter an

inducement to religious perseverance was obtained. Considering the length of time during which he laboured under conviction of sin, and the extent to which he was harassed by doubts and fears, it is hard to conceive how great must have been the advantage to him to bear such a relation to one who had passed through the same conflict and had found peace. Miss Davison was likely to be in every respect a helpmeet for him, her piety and good sense enabling her to aid and encourage him in spiritual things. She, like himself, was a Methodist, holding the same religious views, and could therefore heartily co-operate with him; and her natural disposition was buoyant and hopeful, so that she was well adapted to cheer him in seasons of discouragement. Through the whole of his long Christian life he was greatly indebted to her for the happy influence she exerted over him, in prompting and encouraging him in his labours amidst adverse circumstances. Much of the good he did would probably have been left undone, had it not been for the strength of her resolution and hope.

How important it is that young Christians should select for their partners for life such as are decidedly pious, whose natural dispositions and

mental qualifications are suitable, and whose views of religious truth coincide with their own. Much of the usefulness of married Christians depends upon the character of their husbands or wives, who must ever prove either a help or a hindrance in getting or in doing good. There are many who once did run well, who through an unsuitable alliance have been turned out of the way, and there are many others who long ago would have fallen away from holiness and usefulness were it not for the happy influence of their union with believers. Well might the Apostle give the admonition, “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And that communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?”

Mr. Gate and Miss Davison were married on the first of January, 1808, by the Rev. Mr. Britten, in St. Margaret’s Church, Durham. The bride was given away by her uncle, Mr. Barry. Mr. Sowerby (who had been Mr. Gate’s class leader), Mr. Barry, and other Wesleyans and friends, spent the day with the newly married couple in singing, religious conversation, and prayer, and in the evening they

all attended the prayer-meeting in the Wesleyan Chapel—a good beginning to a happy union that lasted more than fifty-eight years. The commencement of their married life, like its continuance, was hallowed by prayer; they acknowledged the Lord and He blessed them, and directed their paths. Being joined in the Lord, their earnest prayer to Him was—

“ Help us to help each other on,
Each other’s cross to bear ”

The wedding was to have taken place on Thursday, December 31st, but Mr. Gate did not reach Durham till the evening of that day, having been delayed by a snowstorm, which was so severe that he was snow-bound between Alston and Weardale, and his horse and gig had to be cut out by some miners! They left Durham on the Saturday morning, and after a drive of forty-six miles, spent the night at Brough, where they remained till Monday morning, when they went on to Penrith. They went to the Wesleyan chapel at Brough twice on the Sunday, and took tea with the minister, the Rev. John Mercer.

As soon as they arrived at Penrith, Mr. Varty called upon them to congratulate them on their

marriage, and to welcome Mrs. Gate amongst the Penrith Methodists, concluding his visit with prayer. Mrs. Varty also soon called upon Mrs. Gate, and as long as she lived took a kind interest in her, and was to her as a mother. It was cheering to the young wife, after having left home and the warm-hearted friends at Durham, to meet with a cordial welcome from the equally warm-hearted Methodists at Penrith. She at once united herself with the society, meeting in the class of Mr. John Armstrong.

From the time of their marriage to the ensuing Conference, the second preacher (Mr. Barritt) boarded with them, and lodged in the room prepared by Mr. Varty for that purpose. But from that period to the year 1818, Mr. Gate having removed to a more commodious house, one of ^{the} preachers, when there were two in the circuit, boarded and lodged with them. They would gladly have entertained him free of charge had they thought they could have afforded it; as it was, the Quarterly Meeting agreed to allow them a nominal sum for the preacher's board, *when in a position to do so*. It so happened, however, that the Circuit was seldom able to do so—indeed we learn that upon one occasion *all that Mr. Gate received for the*

preacher's board and lodging for more than two years was the sum of 13s.!

He thus rendered considerable help to the circuit at a period when it had to struggle hard to maintain its ground, and it was no small contribution for a young tradesman with but little capital to support a minister for several years almost gratuitously. The Methodists in the Penrith Circuit in those days, exercised a great deal of self-denial, so as to enable them to support the cause of Christ; yet what they did they did cheerfully, and none more so than Mr. and Mrs. Gate.

In the year 1809, Mr. Gate was appointed leader of a class at Penrith, the oversight of which he retained to the time of his death,—a period of fifty-seven years.

In 1811, Mrs. Gate, then in the twenty-fourth year of her age, was appointed leader of a class that had been led by Mrs. Beswick (wife of the Rev. William Beswick), which she still retains. The following year Mr. Gate was elected Circuit Steward, an office which he then, as upon several subsequent occasions, accepted from a sense of duty; but in consequence of his retiring disposition it was not one suited to his taste and feelings.

In the year 1814 the Methodist Society at Pen-

rith sustained a great loss, which was felt by none more than by Mr. Gate, in the removal by death of Mr. William Varty. This exemplary man had been the principal support and stay of the little society at Penrith. His social position gave it a status it otherwise would not have had, which was a considerable advantage in those days when the Methodists were, for the most part, a poor and despised people. As a *man* he was genial, upright, kind-hearted, and sincere, and enjoyed the respect and esteem of all who knew him. As a *Christian* he was consistent, devout, zealous, and liberal-minded. He ever retained a strong regard for the church of his earlier years, and regularly attended her services, when he could do so without neglecting those of the Methodists ; and, it is worthy of remark, that whatever opinion he might have formed of the character or doctrine of any of the clergy, he was never known to speak disparagingly of them. He was a conscientious and hearty Methodist, a liberal supporter of the Society, a faithful class-leader and exhorter, and a diligent visitor of the sick and poor. His death was very sudden, and, for a time, cast a gloom both over the town in which he was so greatly respected, and the little society by whom he was so much beloved.

But he was ready: when the Master came his servant was found watching. On the Sunday morning before his death he prayed at the prayer-meeting with unusual fervour, that whoever might be called away first should be ready; and presented one petition in particular, that lived long in the memories of those that heard it—“*Oh, Lord! let the ripest for heaven be taken first.*” On the following Tuesday evening, as he was returning home from his farm, he met two young women, to whom he spoke about their souls, urging them to give their hearts to God; about half an hour afterwards, as they were repassing that way, near the spot where he had been talking to them, they saw the body of WILLIAM VARTY—but his spirit had “winged its flight to its Almighty source.” His last words were words of admonition, and he “ceased at once to work and live.” “Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing.”

During his lifetime Mr. Varty had let the Methodists have the use of the preaching-room rent free, and after his decease it was found that he had bequeathed it to them. But as the gift was not properly defined, a deputation from the Society waited upon his two sons to consult them as to

what, under the circumstances, had better be done. The Messrs. Varty advised them to dispose of their claim to the property, and to build a chapel, and at the same time offered to give them 200*l.* for the room without the furniture. After much deliberation and prayer, the members of the Society decided to accept the offer, which they considered a very liberal one, and to build a chapel. This was to them a great undertaking, for they were still but few in number, and for the most part poor, but they had already learned to struggle with difficulties, to work hard, and to endure much privation for the cause of Christ, and they were convinced that success would follow their united self-denying efforts. Their desire to have a house dedicated to the worship of God was so strong, that, catching the spirit of David, each could say, “I will not give sleep to my eyes, or slumber to my eyelids, until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.”

Although the Messrs. Varty were not Methodists, yet they entertained a strong regard for the cause with which their father had been identified for the last thirty years of his life; and now that he was taken away from the little struggling society at Penrith, they generously presented to it a site,

valued at 200*l.*, for the chapel. *Mr. Varty and his sons thus contributed 400*l.* towards the erection of the present Wesleyan Methodist Chapel at Penrith.* Mr. Jonathan Varty attended the week-night preaching in the chapel for some years, and the chandeliers, which were used till gas was introduced, were presented by him.

Cheered by the liberal and seasonable help of the Messrs. Varty, at the commencement of their undertaking, the Methodists at Penrith thanked God and took courage. They gave and collected what they could, putting forth every effort, and many of them denying themselves of all but the necessaries of life, for the accomplishment of their purpose, and the Penrith chapel is a monument of their zeal, liberality, and self-denial. Mr. Gate was very anxious that the proposed chapel should be commodious and suitable, but he often felt great concern when he contemplated the cost. At that time he had but little available capital, so that he was not in a position to give much without borrowing, and he had a great abhorence of running into debt. But, seeing that the cause to him so dear needed immediate help, he borrowed 80*l.* from his brother to give to it, and for this sum he paid interest for some years till it was refunded. Being

of a desponding and yet independent disposition, it was an act of great self-denial in him, to have to owe anything, even to his brother.

The late Mr. Thomas Bewsher (who was appointed to lead Mr. Varty's class after his death) took an active interest in the erection of the chapel, and rendered important assistance both by his counsel and liberal contributions. It was an occasion of great joy to the Wesleyans at Penrith, when, in 1815, the object which they had so ardently desired, and for which they had earnestly prayed and diligently laboured, was realised in the completion and opening of a commodious well-built chapel of their own. Two years afterwards a gallery was added to it, making it capable of seating more than 600 persons. The original cost of the chapel was 1,585*l.*; but it was burdened with a debt of 905*l.*, which in 1832 was reduced to 500*l.* And it is worthy of remark that towards this reduction, Mr. John Dalton collected by small weekly subscriptions more than 70*l.* The remainder of the debt was paid off in 1860, and the chapel contributes from seat-rents 50*l.* a-year to the circuit funds.

Mr. Gate was the only one of the original trustees of the chapel who lived to see it free of

debt. For forty-six years he bore his share of the burden, and during that long period it was to him a source of great anxiety. He had often expressed the wish that he might live to see the chapel free of debt, and when that wish was gratified, his joy and gratitude were too great for words to express.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. GATE BECOMES A LOCAL PREACHER—HIS UNSECTARIAN SPIRIT AND ATTACHMENT TO METHODISM—PREACHING—A CROSS AND A PLEASURE—HARD WORK—COLD RECEPTIONS—PREPARATION FOR THE PULPIT—CONSISTENCY OF HIS LIFE—STYLE—COWPER—FAVOURITE THEMES—THE LABOURER OF FOURSORE YEARS—THE OPINION OF A CHURCHMAN.

IT has already beeu stated that Mr. Gate began to preach in 1807. After remaining “on trial” two or three quarters, he had to preach a “trial sermon” before one of the circuit ministers, and to be examined at the Local Preachers’ Meeting. Having satisfactorily passed through this ordeal, he was received as a fully credited Wesleyan local (or lay) preacher. The subjects upon which he had to be examined were—his conversion to God, his call to preach, and his views of the Wesleyan economy.

That he had been savingly converted, and that it was his duty to preach the Gospel, were facts of which neither he nor the meeting had any doubt. The *doctrines* taught by the Methodists he firmly believed to be those of the Bible, and their form

of *Church Government* was to his mind the best adapted for the evangelization of the world ; and as long as he lived, he continued to hold the former, and to adhere to the latter. But whilst he was a Methodist, he was not a bigot,—he claimed for himself the right of private judgment, and allowed it to others: and while conscientious in his attachment to the church of his choice, he honoured Christians of all denominations, and rejoiced to see them cordial in their adherence to their respective forms of Church government. Indifference in Christians to the particular branch of Christ's Church with which they are identified, is generally the result of indifference to *religion*, rather than of a desire to promote Christian union. There may be *unity* without identity, and *harmony* with diversity.

As long as Mr. Gate lived, he was deeply interested in the welfare of the Church of his fathers, and used often to attend her services when they did not interfere with those of his own, and he was equally friendly with Nonconformists. For many years in succession he acted as chairman at the Primitive Methodist Missionary Meeting, he also took a deep interest in, and attended the meetings of the Church of England, and the London

Missionary societies, and he used often to preach for the Independents when their respected pastor—the Rev. W. Brewis—was from home. He loved *all that loved the Lord Jesus*; Paul and Apollos were held in subordination to Christ, and he laboured not so much to make men *Methodists*, as to make them *Christians*. “The people called *Methodists*,” profess to be “the friends of all and the enemies of none,” and as a whole they are such; not being identified either with Churchmen on the one hand, or Dissenters on the other, yet conscientiously and cordially working with both. That Mr. Gate was in this respect a true Wesleyan will appear in the sequel, from the testimony of others.

The approval of and attachment to the Methodist doctrines and discipline, which he expressed at his examination, he retained without interruption or abatement, as long as he lived. For sixty-three years he was a member of the Wesleyan church, and although during that long period it was repeatedly assailed by foes without—and the yet more dangerous foes within, persecutions and secessions—yet he ever remained steadfast, and his confidence in her various institutions was never shaken. His was a *practical* approval of the Methodist

discipline. It will be remembered, that the reluctance with which he preached for the first time, arose partly because he had not been authorised by the Superintendent to do so. The attention to discipline and respect to authority which he then manifested, were retained throughout his after life. He well knew that without law there could be no order, and that without attention to discipline there could be no harmony, and he therefore acted upon the advice of Mr. Wesley, “Do not mend our rules but keep them, and that for conscience sake.” The work allotted him, however hard, he cheerfully performed, and after having been a local preacher for nearly sixty years, he could say that he had never interfered with his appointments on the plan.

The Penrith Circuit at its formation was much more extensive than it is at present, and the work of its local preachers, who at that time were but few, was consequently very arduous. These self-denying men had much to endure; sometimes they were appointed to places eighteen miles distant, and had to get to and from them as best they could, as no provision was made for conveying them; they had often to preach three times on the same day; at some of the places there was no one to entertain them, so that they had either to

take their food with them, or to suffer hunger as well as fatigue, and they were opposed and annoyed in various ways, and for this they received no worldly remuneration whatever.

Mr. Gate was aware of all this ; he had counted the cost before he joined that small but noble band of labourers in the vineyard of the Lord. If he hesitated before resolving to become a local preacher, it was not because of the hardness of the work or the persecution that attended it, but because of his natural timidity and reserve, his humble thoughts of himself, and the view he entertained of the responsibility and dignity of such an office. He never shrank from walking to the most distant places in the roughest weather ; for the sake of Jesus he was ever ready to endure hardship or ridicule, but it was with *fear* and *trembling* he engaged in the sacred work of preaching, and his love to God was severely tried by the command, “Feed My sheep—feed My lambs.” His experience was similar to that of St. Paul when he said, “For though I preach the Gospel I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid upon me : yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel, for if I do this thing willingly I have a reward, but if against my will a dispensation of the Gospel is committed unto me.”

So far as Mr. Gate's natural disposition and inclination, and his feeling of insufficiency were concerned, he did not preach willingly but of necessity. But although preaching was his greatest cross, it was also his greatest joy; the very feelings of humility which tended to keep him back from the work, added to his happiness when engaged in it, and the more he felt his own unworthiness, the more was the honour magnified which the Lord had called him to. There are exquisite sensations of delight which the meek and lowly often experience, to which the proud and self-confident are strangers. Having no confidence in himself, when Mr. Gate saw that good was being done through his instrumentality, he had the assurance that it was the *Lord's doing*, and that the Lord was making him the honoured means of conveying good to his fellow-creatures, and thus he was saved from those doubts and misgivings which often rise in the minds of the self-confident, lest they should be of the number of whom the Lord saith, "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied;" for he was loath to run even when sent, and to prophesy even when spoken to; his disposition to fear saving him from the greater danger of presumption.

When Mr. Gate became a local preacher he cheerfully took his full share of the work of the circuit, which he found to be very hard, indeed he could not have done what he did had he not been blessed with a good constitution.* He frequently had to take the following appointments: Dalston (now in the Carlisle Circuit) eighteen miles from Penrith—preach twice. (He used to walk there on Sunday morning, and to walk back the following morning). Preach at Penruddock at 9 A.M.; Wallthwaite at 2 P.M., and Keswick (eighteen miles from Penrith) at 6 P.M. of the same day. In addition to this he sometimes had to meet two classes at Keswick. (He generally walked to Scales, and then rode to Keswick and back on one of his father's horses, returning on foot to Penrith the following morning, but sometimes he had to walk

* For the last thirty years or more of his life, Mr. Gate was a teetotaler. In the former part of his life he used to take a little stimulant (believing it to be *necessary* for him) when he returned home on a Sunday night, exhausted with the labours of the day; but *after becoming a total abstainer, he felt much less fatigue on the Monday than he did before*. He was one of the first adherents and advocates of temperance (abstinence from spirituous liquors), afterwards teetotalism, and the Penrith Temperance Society was formed in his house. Amongst those who were associated with him in the formation of this society, were the Rev. George Toppin (now Vicar of Hayton), and the late Mr. William Foster Pattinson, Dr. Law, and the Rev. Philip Hardcastle.

the whole of the distance to and fro—THIRTY-SEVEN MILES in the same day). Hesket New Market (fourteen miles from Penrith) Skeugh and Caldbeck (all now in the Wigton Circuit) preaching at each place in the same day. He used to walk to Hesket on the Sunday morning, and to walk back to Penrith, to be in time for business, the following morning.

It required no small amount of resolution and self-denial to rise, as he often did, at four o'clock on a dark and perhaps stormy winter's morning, to walk alone* to a place eighteen miles distant to preach! Surely the love of Christ constrained him, and his works manifested his faith. That such labour should be rendered gratuitously, was to men of the world most unaccountable, and many of them thought that such a labourer should be pitied for his weakness, rather than praised for his zeal. This was the view evidently held by a gentleman, who once deploringly said of Mr. Gate, “He is a fine, industrious young man—but *he is a Methodist!*”

* In those days, when Mr. Gate went to preach in the country, he seldom had any companion, except a faithful little dog of his, called Cæsar, to which he was much attached. When Sunday morning came, and Cæsar saw his master get ready for starting, he used to jump about with evident delight. He generally accompanied his master to the chapel, and if he was not so intelligent a hearer as some, he always behaved as well as any!

Upon one occasion, soon after Mr. Gate became a local preacher, he went, according to appointment, to preach at Penruddock, Wallthwaite, and Keswick, but as he intended to dine at his father's house at Scales he took no food with him. After leaving Penruddock he was overtaken by a heavy thunderstorm, and was soon thoroughly drenched, in consequence of which, when he reached Wallthwaite, he turned into the house in which he was to preach in the afternoon for shelter, and hoped to get something to eat there, as Scales was a mile further on. When he entered the house he found the good folks at dinner, and they asked him to sit down—not at the table to join them—but by the fire to dry himself whilst they went on with their dinner. He was very tired, having walked ten miles and preached, and he was very hungry, not having had anything to eat since an early breakfast (at about six o'clock in the morning), and he would have been thankful for a crust of bread—but even that was not offered to him ! Their conduct would not have appeared so inhospitable had there not been a sufficiency of food on the table ; but as they were about finishing their dinner, Mr. Gate, who was nearly famished, heard the head of the household say to the rest, “ Drup it up, drup it up, don't

leave any," and he had to continue his fast till tea-time, and in the interim to preach, and to walk to Scales ! It is presumed that *such* receptions were given to the preachers only where there were no members in society.

For some years Mr. Gate used to take his food with him, when he went to preach at Kirkoswald (eight miles from Penrith) because there was no one there to entertain him. After preaching there in the morning he used to walk a little way out of the town, and sit down under a hedge to eat his dinner, as "no man gave unto him." In the afternoon he preached again, and then walked home to tea. Once as he was returning home, weary and faint, he sat down by the roadside to rest, and as he thought of the heartlessness of the people, for whose good he was labouring, his feelings overcame him, and *he wept.**

These incidents are given—not by any means as specimens of Cumberland hospitality—but as illustrative of the discouragements that the Methodist preachers both local and itinerant, often met with in those days. They must have been men of

* Not long after this, a Mrs. Dixon (a widow), finding upon inquiry that no one entertained the preachers when they visited Kirkoswald, invited them to her house, and she continued to receive them as long as she lived.

the purest motives, the loftiest purposes, and the most sterling piety, to enable them to do and endure what they did. The present generation of Methodist preachers can truly say, “other men laboured, and we have entered into their labours.”

Notwithstanding that Mr. Gate’s sensitive spirit keenly felt the coldness with which he was often received, and that the work allotted to him was very hard, yet he never murmured nor neglected to take his appointments when able to do so. Preaching was to him a work of faith and a labour of love, and he was happy in it, happy in doing what he believed to be his duty both to God and man, and he almost constantly realized the answer to the prayer—

“ The task Thy wisdom hath assigned
 O let me cheerfully fulfil,
In all my works Thy presence find
 And prove Thy acceptable will.”

Independent of success, there is ever a happy feeling of satisfaction produced in the mind of the Christian labourer by his *endeavour* to do good—an *immediate* reward which is increased by the *assurance* that his *labour shall not be in vain*, and which is made yet greater by the *evidence of success*. Happy, indeed, is the man whom the Lord

delighteth to honour, whose labours He delighteth to own and bless.

Mr. Gate was happy in the *endeavour* to do good, and in the *assurance* and *evidence of usefulness*—happy in the consciousness of God's presence, support, and approval; and happy in the hope of being hereafter acknowledged by Christ before men and angels, and of having addressed to him the words, “Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord;” and, being happy in his work, he often forgot the roughness of the road, the length of his journey, the inclemency of the weather, and the heartlessness of men.

As a local preacher, Mr. Gate made careful preparation for the discharge of his office, giving “himself unto reading and prayer,” and taking “heed unto himself and unto his doctrine.” Bearing in mind during the week the duties devolving upon him on the Sabbath, he diligently searched the Scriptures, and prayed that the Holy Spirit would open his understanding and guide him into all truth, so that he might be “a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” Although as long as he was in business he had but little

time for study, yet his manuscripts bear testimony to the care with which he prepared his sermons even then.

His chief study was the Word of God, for although when he had the opportunity he sought the help of commentaries, and other books that cast light upon the sacred page, yet he believed in the doctrine taught in the Homilies : “There is no truth nor doctrine necessary for our justification and everlasting salvation, but that is, or may be, drawn out of that fountain and well of truth”—the Bible. For many years—as his old, well-used Bible shows—he *read it through consecutively twice in the year*, and this was independent of his reading it to the sick and in public. And whilst he read he also *meditated* upon the law of the Lord, *pondering* it in his heart; and thereby he made himself familiar with Divine truth. His sermons showed an *uncommon* intimacy with the Word of God. He made no pretensions to learning, he seldom quoted the opinions of others upon his themes; but he had ever a higher authority than man to fall back upon, and what he advanced he supported with “Thus saith the Lord,” or “Thus it is written.”

Revelation—like nature—has deep secrets that can be found out only by diligent study, its richest treasures do not lie upon the surface, but have to be dug for, and its brightest gems can be found only by the most patient and careful search. The superficial reader of the Bible sees hardly more of its true riches, than the mariner, gliding over the surface, sees of the hidden treasures of the deep.

To Mr. Gate's diligent study of the Word of God, was joined *prayer for Divine guidance*. He knew that the Gospel might be hid even to the learned, the wise, and prudent, and that it was as necessary for him to be “taught of God,” to enable him to understand and to preach it aright, as it was to the holy men of old who wrote it; and often did his heart burn within him, whilst in answer to his prayer, God “opened to him the Scriptures.” And because he carefully searched the Scriptures, and depended upon God for guidance, he was able to say in his old age—that he never read the Bible without learning something new.

In his early life he had been accustomed to the use of the *Book of Common Prayer*, and he continued to study and to love it when he ceased to be a regular hearer in the Established Church. In

his sermons and prayers he sometimes quoted from it, and occasionally when preaching, he showed that the doctrines he advanced were consistent with its teachings. His doing so tended to remove the prejudices against Methodism, which were in those days generally entertained by the adherents of the Church of England, and the nature of which he well understood from his own experience. A respectable tradesman of the town, who had been strongly prejudiced against the Methodists, permitted Mr. Gate to visit him during his last illness, because he had once heard him preach and quote the Prayer Book.

To qualify himself for the sacred and momentous work of preaching, Mr. Gate not only gave himself unto reading and prayer, but he also endeavoured so to *live* as that he might “adorn the doctrine of God,” and have “a good report of them which are without.” Indeed, his acceptability as a *preacher* arose principally from the high estimation in which he was generally held as a *Christian*. He was not endowed with any extraordinary talents for public speaking, he was not what could be termed either a scholar or an orator, but he *lived* the Gospel—he practised what he preached, and his example gave force and power to his precepts.

His strict integrity and uprightness as a man of business, his undeviating truthfulness, and his faithfulness to his engagements, commanded the respect and confidence of men of the world; and whilst High-Churchmen thought he had no right to preach, and worldly men thought it foolish in him to preach gratuitously, in one respect however all agreed—in *believing him to be a good man and sincere in his desire to do good*. His light so shone before men, that even the godless and profane, were often heard to make such remarks concerning him, as “If there is a good man in the world—that man is Robert Gate,” and sons of Belial with secret awe confessed and admired the beauty of piety as displayed in him, and felt ashamed of sin.

The following incident will serve to show how he was revered even by men of the worst character, and how their conduct was affected by his presence. On a certain occasion, a horse dealer, a man notorious for his blasphemy, who lived in an adjacent village, was boasting in a public-house at Penrith, that he was afraid of no man living, when one of his associates replied that *he dared not swear before Robert Gate*. The boaster at once confessed that he dared not do that, but

he would do anything else ! Thus the ungodly respected him for his piety, and by refraining from doing evil in his presence, paid homage to the religion which he professed, and in consequence of the esteem in which he was generally held, many went to hear him preach who went to hear no one else, and those who heard him paid at least respectful attention to what he said.

Mr. Gate was from the first a very acceptable preacher, and he was generally looked upon as the *minister's substitute*, his services being almost invariably requested when any of the itinerant preachers were unwell, or out of the circuit.

His style of preaching was very simple and impressive. He had a natural, easy flow of thoughts and words, and his sentences were pithy and short, and could be understood by the most ignorant. His views of divine truth were very distinct, and he had the happy art of placing them before his hearers in a clear and unmistakeable light. *He never made any attempt at display,* when he entered the pulpit he felt that he was sent there, not to please men's fancies, *but to save their souls,* and knowing that the people were perishing for lack of knowledge, he endeavoured

by easy words to simplify (instead of by hard ones to mystify) the plan of salvation.

His manner was *strikingly devout and reverential*, and it was as *quiet* as his matter was plain, his preaching tending not so much to startle, as to edify and persuade. The effect of his preaching was not so manifest, though perhaps quite as lasting, and as beneficial to the Church as that of the preaching of those who are more demonstrative. His ministration was nearly always attended by the gentle rain, or the dew of heaven, but seldom by the thunder shower, yet as the former is as necessary for the earth as the latter so also is such preaching as his as necessary for the Church as that of the "sons of thunder." Great excitement seldom accompanied his preaching, his hearers were never carried beyond themselves, but they were filled with awe, and felt the reality of the truths he uttered, as they listened to his sober and earnest discourses.

His appeals were *always earnest and affectionate*. He spoke as one who felt the awful responsibility of his position, in that he was accountable to God for the manner in which he discharged his duty, as one deeply convinced of the importance of religion, and as one who loved his hearers, and

who was concerned about their eternal interests. He spoke from and to the heart, tears often bearing testimony to the depth of his feeling—he often spoke, as he did the first time he preached, “till he wept and the people wept with him.”

He generally adopted the explanatory mode of preaching, and made the Bible its own expositor. He compared Scripture with Scripture, throwing light upon one portion that appeared obscure, by bringing another to bear upon it. In this kind of preaching he excelled, his mind being so well stored with divine truth, and by it he not only edified his hearers, but also gave them to see that the Scriptures contained great riches of wisdom, truth and comfort, which they could realise for themselves by careful reading and prayer, and thus they were struck—not with the clearness with which he explained the Bible—but with the clearness with which it explains itself. And will not God honour that preaching most which honours Him and His Word the most?

He was a faithful preacher. He was never influenced by the desire of those hearers who wish to have “smooth things” prophesied to them, but he always fearlessly delivered the message entrusted

to him, and told the people of their sin, whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear. It was a saying of his that “every sermon ought either to comfort or bite.”

He answered well in every particular to Cowper’s idea of what a Christian preacher ought to be:—

“ I would express him—simple, grave, sincere;
In doctrine uncorrupt, in language plain,
And plain in manner, decent, solemn, chaste,
And natural in gesture, much impressed
Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
May feel it too, affectionate in look,
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of grace to men.”

Although all his sermons contained those vital truths which are necessary to salvation, and the unconverted were never overlooked, yet the subjects from which he most frequently preached were Repentance, Salvation by faith, and the Love of God, especially as manifested in the gift of His Son, and these he was well qualified from his own experience to speak about. For the last few years of his life, like the beloved disciple in his old age, the love of God was the theme upon which he delighted most to dwell, and in it he was often “lost in wonder, love, and praise.” It was no

small privilege to see and hear him preach when more than fourscore years had passed over his head. His appearance was most venerable, his form was slightly bowed, his head was white with age; honesty and benevolence were written upon his face, and kindness beamed from his eyes, and often when dilating upon the love of God his voice faltered with emotion, his face was lighted up with holy joy, and all the freshness and ardour of youth seemed to return.

The following notice appeared in one of the Penrith papers in 1859:—

“A VETERAN LOCAL PREACHER.

“On Sunday week, Mr. Robert Gate—a gentleman who has seen nearly fourscore years, and who has been a local preacher for upwards of half a century, was appointed to preach twice in the Wesleyan Chapel at Shap. He walked to his appointment in the morning, a distance of eleven miles, and performed his duty.* Mr. Gate is a good old Wesleyan of the primitive school—the only connecting link between the Wesleyans who lived in Penrith fifty years ago and those of the present day, and his truly venerable appearance—either in the pulpit or out of it—

* In the latter part of his life Mr. Gate was generally appointed in the same direction as his son-in-law (also a local preacher), who used to drive him to his appointed place, and call for him in the evening. On this occasion the friends at Shap had agreed to send to meet Mr. Gate, but through some mistake failed to do so.

is familiar to the inhabitants of every village within a circle of fifteen miles round Penrith. He joined the society when the name of “Methodist” was a reproach, and stood firm to his profession in the days of persecution, when their places of worship were besieged by black-guards, and themselves prevented from accepting any office of trust or profit by the operation of the Test and Corporation Acts; and now in the decline of life he not only preaches wherever and whenever the superintendent may appoint, but takes upon himself the duties of a home missionary, visits the sick poor, to point out to them ‘the way, the truth, and the life,’ and frequently contributes from his own resources to alleviate their temporal necessities.”

In April, 1862, the *Penrith Advertiser* contained the following contribution, which is from the pen of Jacob Thompson, Esq., of Hackthorpe, a member of the Established Church, and well known to the public by his paintings, who has kindly permitted the writer to give his name:—

“A GOOD SAMARITAN.

“How welcome after a long dreary winter and still colder spring, was that burst of genial warmth and sunshine, which ushered in the 17th of April—Palm Sunday.

“On that morning the sun had risen many degrees above the horizon, and its influence had already been felt in the valley, when we left our home by a moorland track, for the village of Newby. The trees, meadows, and hedges, which the cold night had encrusted in hoar frost, were now

covered with glistening drops of dew, vieing in colour with the brightest hues of the rainbow. The lambs full of new life gambolled on the green sward. Around was the busy hum of insects, while high in blue ether soared the tuneful lark, making the welkin ring with notes of praise to Him who fills our hearts with overflowing gladness. Soft and balmy was the morning breeze, which just gave indication of its invisible presence, by gently waving the pendent branches of the pale green larch, now bursting into leaf. Amidst all the beauty and loveliness of nature, there was one object on the path before us, that led our thoughts towards a more permanent and lasting state of happiness than could be derived from the enjoyment of a fickle April morning. It was the sight of a venerable old man, who has attained the patriarchal age of eighty-two years, going forth to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation. We were present when this worthy man entered the little chapel at Newby, and took his appointed place among an attentive and devout congregation. Never do we remember to have heard a more earnest and zealous advocate of Christian truths, or one more free from sectarian prejudices. He informed us that he had lately had the privilege of hearing the Bishop of Carlisle preach, and spoke in high terms of the ministry of that excellent divine. Few things are calculated to make such deep and lasting impressions on the mind as the sublime truths contained in the Book of God, when expounded by a man of age and experience, whose past life has been spent in accordance with his present teaching. The man we on that day had the privilege of hearing, justly bears such a character—early and late may this good Samaritan be found bent on some holy mission, conveying to the poor afflicted both spiritual and temporal

aid. Often has this benevolent old man, with a sympathy full of human gentleness, been the guide, guardian, and friend of those who were travelling towards the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Many a blessing has fallen on his well directed efforts; and many a repentant sinner has received comfort and hope from his kind and considerate counsel. Long may this good Samaritan be spared to perform his mission. Reader! his name is 'ROBERT GATE.' "TAU."

CHAPTER V.

THE METHODIST CLASS MEETING—MR. GATE AS A LEADER—USEFULNESS—TESTIMONY OF MR. JOHN MAWSON—MR. GATE'S ACTIVE INTEREST IN SUNDAY SCHOOLS—ORIGIN AND PROSPERITY OF THE MEETING-HOUSE LANE SUNDAY SCHOOL—THE RAGGED SCHOOL—THE TRACT SOCIETY—THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY—LETTER OF THE REV. T. R. MOXON—THE BIBLE SOCIETY.

ABOUT a year after Mr. Gate began to preach, he was (in 1808) appointed a *Wesleyan class-leader*, an office he continued to hold up to the time of his death.

It is the duty of a leader “to see each person in his class once a week at least, in order to inquire how their souls prosper, and to advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require,” and this duty Mr. Gate endeavoured faithfully to perform for nearly sixty years. He was *strongly* attached to the class-meeting, and he used frequently, and especially in his old age, gratefully to speak of the benefit he had derived from it.

This institution has been of incalculable service to the Methodist Church, and has been one great cause of her prosperity, for by its means her converts have been introduced into the society of older

and more experienced Christians, and have received instruction suited to their individual requirements. It has tended to deepen the interest of the members in each other's welfare, and to promote sympathy, love, and co-operation amongst them.

It is required of those who meet in class that they have "a desire to flee from the wrath to come," to be saved from their sins, and that they manifest the same. "First, By doing no harm, by avoiding evil in every kind. . . Secondly, By doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as is possible, to all men. . . Thirdly, By attending upon all the ordinances of God." A class is generally composed of about twelve members, one of whom is styled *the leader*, who meet together once a week for the purpose of religious conversation and prayer. Each member is expected to speak briefly of his religious experience during the preceding week, and of the present state of his mind, so that all may learn from each, and each receive from the leader, counsel suited to his particular state.*

* The *Class-meeting* is not confined to Methodism, there are clergymen of the Church of England and Nonconformist ministers who have introduced similar meetings among their flocks.

Such meetings, though distasteful to the worldly and indifferent, cannot fail to prove most advantageous to earnest Christians; for conversation about experimental godliness tends to promote the vitality of religion in the soul, and to produce clearer views and deeper impressions of Divine things, and an opportunity is afforded them to “provoke one another unto love and to good works.”

As a class-leader, Mr. Gate deeply felt the responsibility of his position, and he made careful preparation for the important duty of instructing, exhorting, and warning those committed to his care. *He was regular in his attendance at his class*, never being absent except when *unavoidably detained*. He so arranged his business engagements as that they might not interfere with his duty as a leader, for he was too conscientious to hold an office in the church without paying due attention to its requirements. His members therefore could depend upon his being present, and thus his profession of attachment to this means of grace was verified by his practice. By precept as well as example he encouraged their *regular attendance*, knowing that *occasional neglect* was too often followed by *habitual neglect* of the class-meeting.

When this means of grace becomes distasteful either to leader or members, it is generally the *result*, and not the *cause*, of the neglect of it.

Mr. Gate's exhortations to his class were earnest and faithful, he spoke as one who felt the importance of religion, and it was evident that he was in earnest about his own salvation, and that of *each* of his members. His manner was kind and encouraging, and he ever manifested deep sympathy with the timid and sorrowing. One of his members who had received his early training in the Established Church writes concerning him, "As my class-leader, I testify gratefully to what I considered especially kind notice and attention, tending much to the removal of prejudice, and replacing it with warm attachment." And there are many others who will ever gratefully remember the kindness and encouragement received from him, and without which they had fainted by the way, or grown weary in well doing.

His exhortations, like his sermons, were rich with Divine truth, generally containing some portion of Scripture suited to the varied wants of his members. In giving his experience he was unaffected, conscientious, and brief; and he often

exhorted his members to “speak short and to the point,” expressing his disapprobation of long or set speeches in such meetings, as tending to diminish, rather than promote, their good effect.

He took a deep interest in the welfare of those whom he was appointed to lead, and was ever anxious to know the religious state of each, and when he was satisfied that they were growing in grace, and were adorning their profession, he thanked God and took courage; but his regret and concern were manifest when he saw in any of them signs of spiritual declension. When he believed reproof was necessary he administered it, but with such evident affection and meekness, and in a manner so kind, that he seldom, if ever, gave offence. So anxious was he about the welfare of his class, that when here turned home at night after meeting it, the members of his family could generally tell from his countenance whether the attendance and meeting had been encouraging or not.

The cause of God lay very near his heart, and his chief joy was in its prosperity. His class was the largest in the Penrith Society, and contained for many years about thirty members (including nearly all the local preachers in the town), over

whom he watched with all a father's solicitude and care. Some of those who met in his class are now ministers,* some class leaders, and a large number are local preachers. Who can estimate the amount of good which these labourers received from his faithful, judicious counsels, and godly walk and conversation—good which they are now communicating to others? And to how many whom he never saw has he thus been, and will be, indirectly made a blessing! “*He being dead yet speaketh.*”

The following is an extract from a letter written by the late John Mawson, Esq., Sheriff of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (who was killed by the nitro-glycerine explosion, December, 1867), to Mrs. Gate on hearing of the death of her husband:—“My dear friend's death brings before my mind a thousand memories, and awakens thoughts and impressions produced by his kindly counsel and advice, which have been stored up more than thirty years, and yet some of them have all the freshness of yesterday. I have often thought that his good spirit has been a guardian angel to me, ever since I met in his class; and the world seems ever more

* The late Rev. James C. Hindson was a member of this class, Mr. Gate heard him preach his first sermon (at Pooley), encouraged him in the work and *proposed* him at the Local Preachers' meeting.

solitary to me, now that he is gone. But no ! he is with me still, and that bright spirit will still be unto me a ministering angel, and by God's blessing help to guide and guard me through what remains of life's changeful scenes. . . . May the lessons he has taught us, both by his life and death, ever be present to our minds, and encourage us to follow his bright and godly example."

Whilst Mr. Gate was endeavouring faithfully to discharge his duties as a local preacher, and a class leader, he did not confine himself to them, but he sought out and engaged in other modes of usefulness, both to the Church and his fellow-creatures. He took a deep and active interest in Sunday-schools, in Tract, Missionary, and Bible Societies, and in the welfare of the Poor and the Sick.

During the whole of his career he deeply felt the importance of the religious training of the *young*, and did what he could to promote it. He saw that children required such information, and such a mode of conveying it, as the pulpit could but partially afford, and as Sunday-schools appeared to him to supply this want, they had his unqualified approval and cordial support. Soon after he had united himself to the Methodist Society at Penrith,

he became a teacher in a Sunday-school, which was then being conducted in the Old Grammar School, and which was the only one in the town. The school was not directly connected with any one religious denomination, and its principal teachers besides Mr. Gate, were Mr. John Armstrong (a Wesleyan class leader), and Mr. Isaac Hewetson (a Member of the Society of Friends). But, although Mr. Gate taught in this school whenever his engagements as a local preacher would permit, yet he could not rest satisfied till the Wesleyans had one of their own, in which the same truths would be taught and enforced as were preached in the chapel, for he believed it was best for every Christian congregation to have a Sunday-school of its own.

The Penrith Wesleyan Sunday-school (Meeting House Lane) was commenced in the year 1819, by Mrs. Rawson (wife of the superintendent of the circuit) and Mrs. Gate, who went about to gather together children that did not attend the other school. The school was conducted in the chapel, and soon after its commencement, Mr. John Armstrong was appointed its superintendent. On the first Sunday there were about twenty children present, and on the second Sunday about forty,

the numbers continuing gradually to increase, the present number on the books being twenty-six teachers and 240 children.* In 1844, the present commodious and substantial schoolroom was built for the double purpose of a Day and Sunday-school, in connection with the Penrith Society.

This institution has proved a great blessing to the Town and Society with which it has been connected, some of its scholars have become ministers of the Gospel, several local preachers, and a great many zealous and useful members of society, and Penrith Methodism is greatly indebted to it for the position which it at present occupies. It is to be regretted that the importance of Sunday-schools is not more deeply felt than it generally is, for the young are the hope of the Church, and if proper attention is not paid to their training, the Church, in the future, will in consequence suffer. A small society with a good Sunday-school, is more hopeful than a large society with an inferior Sunday-school, and there is but little fear of a church *dying out*, when the *lambs* of the flock are properly cared for.

* The efficiency and prosperity of this school are to be attributed to a great extent to the judicious and zealous labours of Mr. Isaac Lowthian, who was for many years its superintendent, and who, by his kindness and firmness in its management, won the respect both of teachers and scholars.

As soon as the Penrith Wesleyan Sunday-school was established, Mr. Gate availed himself of every opportunity of teaching in it, and he encouraged and supported it to the utmost of his ability, and Mrs. Gate and their daughters were teachers in it. Having witnessed with great satisfaction and gratitude the success of the Sunday-school at Penrith, he took an active part in the establishment of this institution in most of the places in the circuit. He was so deeply interested in Sunday-schools, and so well adapted for advocating their claims, that for many years in succession he preached the annual sermons in aid of them, in various places, both in and beyond his own circuit. He preached the sermons and attended the annual meeting of the Matterdale Sunday-school from its commencement, for fourteen years in succession, and it was a source of great regret in that locality when he was no longer able to do so. His annual visits there were looked forward to and remembered with great pleasure by old and young, and so much was he respected and beloved by all classes, that on these occasions the chapel used to be crowded to overflowing, and the congregations were often melted into tears as they listened to his earnest and affectionate discourses.

In 1851 a Ragged-school was commenced in the Town Head—(a part of the town of Penrith, inhabited principally by the poor) — by Messrs. William Vipond and William Nanson, and was soon afterwards placed under the management of the Committee of the Meeting House-lane Sunday-school. At first it was conducted in a room hired for the purpose, but in 1864 it was transferred to the Mission Chapel, which had been presented to the Wesleyan Connexion by Mr. Gate's son-in-law (Mr. John Pattinson). The present number of teachers on the books is 16, and scholars 130, making a total for both the schools of 42 teachers and 370 scholars.

The Townhead Sunday-school from its commencement had Mr. Gate's warmest sympathies, and *when he was more than eighty-four years of age* he commenced a Night-school in the Mission Chapel, which he held once a week, hoping thereby to benefit the children of a neglected locality in which he had for a long time taken a deep interest, and whose welfare occupied his last thoughts; but his strength was not equal to the task, and with great reluctance he had to give it up. He was willing beyond his power.

Mr. Gate took an active part in the formation of

the *Penrith Wesleyan Tract Society*; in the earlier years of its existence he was one of its distributors, and for the last thirty years of his life he was its secretary. This Society was originated in the year 1823, by Mrs. Treffit (wife of the Rev. Anthony Treffit), and Mrs. Gate, who collected money with which to purchase tracts, and afterwards engaged a few persons to assist them in their distribution. From that period to the present the operations of this Society have been steadily and successfully carried on; it has been made a blessing to many, and some have attributed their conversion to its instrumentality. The present number of distributors is thirty-one; tracts in circulation (some being sent into the country) about 2,000.

A vast amount of good has been and is being accomplished by Religious Tract Societies; by their means in numberless instances the ungodly have been instructed and awakened; neglectors of religion have been induced to attend the house of prayer, where many of them have been brought to a saving knowledge of the truth, and light and consolation have been imparted to the erring and the distressed. It would be of incalculable service to Christianity if every town and village had its Religious Tract Society.

Another institution in which Mr. Gate took a deep and active interest, was the *Wesleyan Missionary Society*. After having held the office of Secretary to the Penrith Branch of this Society for several years, he was, on the decease of Mr. Thomas Bewsher in 1846, appointed to succeed him as treasurer, which office he retained up to the time of his death. He also rendered considerable service to the Mission cause by attending and taking part in the annual meetings in most of the places in the Circuit. At these meetings he was ever most cordially received; his earnest and hearty addresses always told upon his hearers, and at many of the places the platform was not considered complete unless he was there. Referring to Mr. Gate's connection with the *Missionary Society*, the Rev. Timothy R. Moxon writes: "He felt a deep interest in the cause of Foreign Missions, in aid of which he both begged and gave. Many happy hours have I spent with him at the country meetings in the Penrith Circuit. A meeting held at Penruddock (in 1841) was the first at which we met; it was held in the Presbyterian chapel, as our own was not then built. I shall not soon forget the pleasure that beamed on his countenance, as first one and then another pro-

mised, whilst he was speaking, to give a goose, a sheep, &c., for Wesleyan Missions. His shop was the dépôt for all live stock, and when he could not get market price for them, he became the purchaser at market price himself." Mr. Gate continued to attend some of the country meetings up to the eighty-fifth year of his age, when to his own regret, as well as that of many, he became too weak to endure the fatigue of travelling. He deeply loved the Mission cause, and often would tears of joy steal down his face as he heard or read of the success of the Gospel in heathen lands, and thought of the time when the *knowledge of the Lord should cover the earth.*

The British and Foreign Bible Society had also his warm and active sympathy. He was a member of the committee of the Penrith Branch (now Auxiliary) of this Society, from its formation in 1813 to the time of his death—a period of fifty-three years; he was many years one of its secretaries, and his shop was the Bible dépôt for the latter part of the time that he was in business. He also rendered valuable service to this Society by collecting for it, and by assisting at the country meetings. He highly prized the Word of God himself, and was anxious to have

it placed within the reach of every man. But of the high estimation in which his character and services were held by this Society the writer need say nothing, as its own records bear testimony to it, and extracts from them are given further on.

CHAPTER VI.

MR. GATE AS A VISITOR OF THE SICK—HIS SELF-DENYING LIBERALITY—THE GOOD SAMARITAN SOCIETY—ADVANTAGES OF SUCH AN INSTITUTION—RETIREMENT FROM BUSINESS—A PROVIDENTIAL CIRCUMSTANCE—EXTENT OF VISITATION—GOLDSMITH—EXTRACT FROM THE HISTORY OF PENRITH—INSTANCES OF USEFULNESS—A DAUGHTER'S GRATITUDE FOR HER MOTHER'S CONVERSION.

MR. GATE as a servant of the Lord Jesus was anxious to “do good as he had opportunity to all men,” irrespective of creed or station, and thus to be “always abounding in the work of the Lord;” and no day was spent by him to his satisfaction, unless part of it had been devoted to the spiritual interests of his fellow-creatures.

It has already been shown that much of his time was spent in connection with various institutions in serving the cause of God, but there was one mode of usefulness in particular, in which he took a special interest, and which occupied more of his time than any other—*the visitation of the sick poor.*

He ever gratefully remembered the benefit he

had derived from the preaching of the Gospel, and during the whole of his long career of Christian usefulness, his heart yearned for those who were prevented by affliction—some of them for years together—from attending the house of God, and from hearing words whereby they might be saved. This class of the community, so deserving of sympathy, and so often overlooked, began to engage his attention soon after his conversion, and in about a year after he became a *visitor of the sick*, though not till he had been sent for, his natural timidity and fear of intrusion having till then kept him back.

He was well-qualified both by grace and nature for this work, having an experimental knowledge of the plan of salvation, and being of a gentle, kind and sympathising disposition; and in addition to this it was evident to the sick that it was a *pleasure* to him to do good, so that they had no hesitation in sending for him. He devoted to the spiritual interests of the sick poor, as much time every day as his business and other engagements would permit, as well as the intervals between the services of God's house on the Sabbath, when he was at home; but so highly were his services appreciated, that for many years the requests made to

him to visit the sick were often more numerous than he could attend to. Although his principal aim was to promote their spiritual welfare, he was not unmindful of their temporal necessities, his sympathy was immediately aroused by scenes of poverty and want, and he always relieved them to the utmost of his power. He was never possessed of much of this world's good, and to enable him to contribute what he did towards the support of God's cause, and to relieve the needy, he had to work very hard when in business, for many years beginning at five o'clock in the morning, and continuing often till late at night; and to exercise the strictest economy, contenting himself with but little more than the bare necessities of life. For many years he denied himself of the convenience of a *watch*, and, after having been prevailed upon to buy one, in a little while, seeing he could do without it, he sold it to enable him to give more to the poor.

Reference has already been made to the timidity of his disposition; in consequence of it he was often harrassed with a morbid dread of being at any time unable to pay his way, and of coming to want. The late Rev. Phillip Hardeastle, in speaking of him, often referred to his needless

fear, and used to say that, “Although Mr. Gate generally looks on the dark side of the cloud, he always comes out on the bright side.” But while this disposition tended to make him extremely careful to avoid extravagance and waste, it never lessened his liberality.

How much he gave to, and endured for the sake of, the poor and needy, is known only to Him who knoweth all things, for his alms were done in secret, and he let not his left hand know what his right hand did, so that even the members of his family knew not the extent of his charity. He went about *noiselessly doing good*, shunning rather than courting the observation and praise of men, for he was actuated by a nobler motive and had a higher reward, and he never liked talking about himself, or what he had done. But although his nearest friends could get but little information from *himself*, yet instances of his benevolence sometimes came to light without his knowledge. Upon a certain Sunday, some time after he had become a visitor of the sick, his servant-girl overheard him say that he was “*going to see some poor things*,” and that as he could not go without “*a small matter*” in his pocket, he had to go upstairs to get some change that he had left in his bedroom.

Being curious to know how much he gave away upon such occasions, she went to his room to ascertain the amount of the change, which happened to be 12s. The following morning her curiosity was satisfied, as a circumstance arose which showed that the whole of the 12s. had been given away. It is not probable that he could often afford to give away so much in one day, yet, according to the ability that the Lord had given, he almost *daily* relieved the distressed.

But the worth of charity in the eyes of God depends not upon the amount given, *but upon the extent to which men deny themselves* for the sake of the poor, and the motive which prompts them to give. Many give largely who do not give to such an extent as to necessitate their denying themselves of any earthly comfort or convenience, and they give less than those whose gifts, though small, are the fruit of hard labour and self-sacrifice; whilst others give that they may have praise of men—for the sake of appearance, and consequently their gifts, whether great or small, are of little worth in the sight of God. But how vain is the religion of those who make no effort to feed the hungry and clothe the naked; for, “Whoso hath this world’s goods, and seeth his brother

need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, *how dwelleth the love of God in him?*” It is worthy the serious consideration of every Christian that the dread sentence of the Universal Judge, “Depart ye cursed,” will be pronounced upon those who had opportunites of doing good to the poor, and did it not; whilst, on the other hand, the service rendered to them will be acknowledged and rewarded by Christ, as though it had been done to Him. And here is a perpetual and universal sphere for usefulness, “The poor always ye have with you.”

In the year 1830, a few friends, like-minded with Mr. Gate, agreed to meet him every Tuesday evening at his shop, to contribute what they could towards the relief of the poor, and to call the attention of each other to such cases as appeared to be the most necessitous and deserving. This was the commencement of the *Penrith Good Samaritan Society*, an institution which has already been a blessing to thousands of the poor. The following extracts from the Rules of the Society will give the reader an idea of its constitution and design:—

“The object of this Society is the relief of the sick poor, without distinction of sect or party, at their own

dwellings. . . . The Superintendent of the Penrith (Wesleyan) Circuit, for the time being, shall be the President. . . . All the members of the Committee, with such persons as they shall appoint, shall be collectors. . . . One or more of the Committee, with such of the subscribers as they shall appoint, shall visit the sick, inquire into their state of mind, give such advice as may seem suitable, and pray with them if possible. The visitors shall also inquire particularly into the circumstances of the sick, take the name, number of family, and place of abode, in writing, and deliver it on the Wednesday evening following to the secretaries, who shall regularly insert it in a book provided for that purpose with the money given to each person."

From the Report of the Society for the past year (1867), we learn that relief, varying in amount from one shilling to five shillings, had been granted during the year, in 290 cases; that the visitors had met with many cases of extreme poverty, and that more than once the word *starvation* had appeared on the relief record to describe the ground of claim.

The advantages of such a Society are obvious: First, *It saves the benevolent from imposition.* The town is divided into districts, each having its own visitor, whose business it is to find out who are destitute in his appointed locality, to ascertain their circumstances, habits, and desert, and to re-

lieve and advise accordingly. By regular visitation, inquiry and oversight, the visitors are generally able to ascertain who are really deserving of pecuniary aid, so that those who give to the poor through them as their almoners, have every reason to believe that they relieve not only the needy and deserving, but the *most* needy and *most* deserving, and they are thus saved from encouraging impostors. Secondly, *Cases of real distress are found out.* There are many, and amongst them perhaps the most deserving, who would rather starve than seek relief, either from the parish, or from door to door; and how often is the sad tale told of some of these, who, after having, unknown to the world around, struggled hard and long with difficulties, and suffering from *want*, have found relief at last—in death! death from starvation! The system of indiscriminate giving to the poor, relieves in general only the more forward, but with such an institution as the Good Samaritan Society, *the timid and sensitive*, and, therefore, the more to be pitied, are also found out and relieved. *And, thirdly, such visits to the homes of the poor often give access to their hearts.* Man's greatest power over his fellow-man is that of *kindness*, and by it the most

stubborn and proud spirited have been subdued and humbled. The writer once visited a poor woman in Penrith, whose husband at that time was one of the most hardened and profane men he ever met with, but who afterwards became a consistent and useful member of the Wesleyan Society and a Sunday-school teacher. This man who seemed to have been a stranger to the fear both of God and man, was subdued by Christian kindness, and to it he attributed his first good impressions and ultimate conversion.

The visitors have opportunities for expressing sympathy with the distressed, for giving them godly counsel, and often for praying with them, and by so doing they may be the means of the salvation—not only of the sufferer—but also as in the case above referred to—of the sufferer's family.

Such and similar institutions are deserving of the support of all Christians and Christian Societies, and it will generally be found that where they do not exist, the proportion of the poor who attend the house of God will be very small.

In the year 1847, a cousin of Mrs. Gate's (and son of Mr. James Barry) died, leaving her a legacy, the amount of which, added to what they had already, enabled Mr. Gate to retire from business

the following year, from which period to the time of his death he devoted himself entirely to the work of the Lord. For some time before the occurrence of this event—Mr. Gate being then in the sixty-eighth year of his age, his nearest relatives had been anxious that he might retire from the cares and toils of business; but there were two difficulties in the way—he was not possessed of sufficient property to retire upon, and they feared that so long as he was able to work he would not consent to retire and be in any measure dependent upon others.

They made the subject a matter of continued and earnest prayer to God, who in a manner *quite unexpected*, afforded His timely aid, removing the difficulties, and making the path plain. And how clearly may the hand of God been seen in this circumstance—that at the time when Mr. Gate's friends were feeling anxious concerning him, and were praying for Divine guidance, help was sent, and he was placed in such a position as that he could retire from business without being dependent upon others, and devote the whole of his time to the work he so dearly loved.

Before his retirement most of his time had been necessarily occupied by worldly business; but *now*

his business was to go about doing good, and this *he delighted in*, preferring it above his chief joy.

We have no means of ascertaining the extent of his visitation of the sick before his natural strength had begun to abate, as he made but two records of the number of visits made by him in a given time, and they refer to the latter part of his life. From these we learn that *from May to December, 1859, he made 1,339 visits; read a portion of Scripture to those he visited, 1,321, and prayed with them 1,248 times.* *Of those he had visited, forty-three died during that period.* In the year 1862, WHEN HE WAS EIGHTY-TWO YEARS of age, he made 1,825 visits, and of those he had visited, forty-eight died during the year. After the establishment of the Good Samaritan Society, being one of the visitors, he was able to give more extensively to the poor than before. He generally supplied the want of the needy *in kind*, either buying and taking them what he thought necessary, or giving them an order upon some shop, for goods to a certain amount, which course he, in most cases, found to be the safest, as sometimes when he had given money, it was spent by those for whom it had not been intended, the sufferer being left to suffer unrelieved. He was not ashamed to be seen going to the homes of the

destitute, carrying perhaps a parcel of clothing, or groceries, or a loaf of bread, that he might give it into the hands of those for whom it was intended. No false pride kept him back from performing such deeds of mercy, and he was willing to make himself of no reputation, *so long as he could do good, and do it in the best way.*

He not only relieved according to his ability the wants of the sick poor whom he visited, but he also manifested an interest in their general welfare, making inquiries after their health, family, &c., and his kind sympathising manner generally won for him their confidence and affection, and thus the way was opened for more serious inquiry and advice. By plain and pointed questions, he endeavoured to ascertain their spiritual state, and then read, expounded, and applied some portion of Scripture that he deemed most suited to their condition, after which he concluded with prayer. Earnestness was joined to the kindness of his manner, and he spoke as one who felt the greatest anxiety about the salvation of their souls, and often whilst he spoke deep impressions were made, tears of contrition flowed, and the penitent's cry for mercy was uttered. So deep an interest did he take in the welfare of the sick, that

sometimes when he returned home from preaching in the country, on a Sunday night, almost exhausted by the labours of the day, he has gone to visit some poor sick or dying person that had sent for him, and he seemed to forget his own fatigue in the pleasure he took in doing good. Indeed, the members of his family felt that they dared not always tell him when he was sent for, because he was so regardless of his own health in his desire to benefit others. Even contagious diseases could not keep him back from visiting the afflicted and dying; but, although he frequently visited in low and filthy places where fevers often raged, yet by the kind providence of God neither he nor any of his family ever suffered in consequence.

“ Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings leaned to virtue's side,
But in his duty, prompt at every call,
He watch'd and wept, he prayed and felt for all ;
And as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt her new fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allur'd to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt and pain by turn dismayed,
The reverend champion stood. At his control
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul,
Comfort came down, the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whispered praise.”

The following is an extract from Walker's *History of Penrith* (second edition, 1861) :—

“This notice (of Methodism in Penrith) would be incomplete without the mention of the name of Mr. Robert Gate, the Wesleyan Home Missionary, for such he is entitled to be called. Mr. Gate is, we believe, the oldest member of the Society in Penrith ; he has been a local preacher for upwards of fifty years, and, since his retirement from business, has been almost entirely engaged in attending the sick poor. Not only does Mr. Gate read to them the Scriptures, and point out to them in his own kind and homely manner the way of salvation, but administers at the same time to their temporal necessities from his own resources. At a bazaar got up by the Wesleyans in 1860, the object of which was to clear off the debt from the chapel, his likeness, which had been published, was eagerly sought after. He is a pattern in the Society of which he has so long been a member.”

Referring to the success attending Mr. Gate's visitation of the sick, Mr. Pattinson (his son-in-law) writes :—“It was most pleasing to hear him relate some of the many instances he witnessed of light dawning upon the dark minds of those he visited, their emotions as they were gradually brought to see their state, danger, and only hope of salvation, and their joy when God spoke peace to their souls. Some of them were truly marvellous illustrations of the power of saving grace,

and of the real conversion and final salvation of many he had no doubt." Mr. Gate, as a rule, had but little confidence in the efficacy of death-bed repentance, and the cases of many whom he was sent for to visit he considered hopeless; but, on the other hand, he had every reason to believe that many others whom he had visited found salvation during their last illness. The following are some of the instances to which Mr. Pattinson refers:—Upon a certain occasion Mr. Gate was sent for to visit a young woman who resided in the lowest part of the town, the daughter of a man well known to the public as "*Wicked Jack.*" She had been a Sunday scholar, but had fallen away from virtue. He found her in a most wretched condition, suffering from want, disease, and remorse, and in great distress about her soul. He spoke to and prayed with her, and continued to visit her for some time, and was made instrumental in her conversion. The poor creature was never again restored to health, but she was restored to virtue and peace, and died believing in Jesus.

At another time he was called into a house to see a young lady, who had been a regular attendant of the Established Church, and who was far

gone in consumption. She had found peace with God, her mind having been enlightened by reading her Bible; nevertheless, her evidence of acceptance not being so clear as she desired, and having great confidence both in Mr. Gate's piety and acquaintance with Divine truth, she wished to see him to state her case to him. After some conversation with her, he was satisfied that hers was a genuine conversion, and a well-founded hope, he confirmed her in her faith, and at her request visited her to the last. Mr. Gate was afterwards called in to visit her brother, who did not long survive her, to whom also he was made a blessing.

On another occasion he was sent for to visit a poor sick woman, the wife of a travelling tinker, in the Townhead. He found her in a most destitute condition, lying on something on the floor that had to answer for a bed. He at once relieved her temporal necessities, and then spoke to her about the interests of her soul, and prayed with her. She listened eagerly to all that he said, manifesting signs of deep sorrow on account of sin, and, on a subsequent visit, he found her rejoicing in God, as *her* Saviour. The remainder of her life was short, but very happy; she gave

every evidence of a change of heart, and expressing her unshaken confidence in Jesus to the last, died in great peace. Not long after her death, her husband, who was unknown to Mr. Gate, accosted him in the street, and expressed his fervent gratitude for his kindness to his wife. Mr. Gate was very much touched with the earnestness with which the poor man thanked him, and he referred to it in his family with evident pleasure.

Mr. William Harris, one of the Penrith Town Missionaries, and a member of the Congregational Church, has kindly furnished the following facts:—Mr. Gate regularly visited four of Mr. Harris's children, during their last illness—some of them for a period of more than six months. Two of them were converted through his instrumentality, and the others professed to having been blessed by his visits, and all of them died in the full assurance of faith. The first that died, for some time before her death was so happy that she frequently cried out, “Victory! victory! through the blood of the Lamb—Jesus is mine, and I am His!” using many similar expressions of confidence and joy. Another, on the day before her death, said, in reply to some questions put to

her by Mr. Gate, “I am very weak, but *very* happy; I am waiting till the Lord shall see fit to call.” On leaving her, Mr. Gate said, “We shall meet again.” “Yes,” she replied, “yes, on the celestial hill.” After he left her, he said to the sorrowing parents, “Bless the Lord for such a testimony as hers.” Surely they had not to mourn as them without hope!

Mr. Harris has communicated other instances of Mr. Gate’s usefulness, from which the following are taken:—“Mary L—, Friar Street, was led to Christ five years ago, through Mr. Gate’s instrumentality, and is still going on her way rejoicing. Mrs. Graham, Little Dockray, was led by him to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and found Him precious in death. Thomas Tears, an old soldier: Mr. Gate was the means of awaking him; he embraced the truth, and died in peace.”

Mr. Samuel Parkin, Wesleyan Town Missionary, Penrith, has favoured the writer with the following communication:—“In my visitations from house to house, I have met several who speak of Mr. Gate with feelings of gratitude and respect, and deeply lament the loss they sustain now that he is no more among them. His kind words and

sympathising looks, as well as his benevolent deeds, are still fresh in their memories, and ‘his name is as ointment poured forth.’ The following cases are among the many that might be pointed out as illustrations of Mr. Gate’s zeal, piety, and benevolence :—Mary Wilkinson, a widow, of about seventy years of age. She has been confined to her room for about fifteen years by rheumatism, and is quite helpless. In the course of my conversation with her, I found out to my satisfaction that she was the subject of the saving grace of God, and that the principal agent God had employed in effecting that blessed change of heart was the late and much-lamented Mr. Gate. She said to me, ‘I shall never forget Mr. Gate’s kindness to me, and the care he showed both for my body and soul. I well remember how I felt when he told me of my sinfulness and danger, pointed out to me the way of salvation by simple faith in Christ as my Saviour, and prayed with me and for me ; and my joy when I was enabled to sing,

‘No condemnation now I dread,
Jesus and all in Him is mine.’

I bless God that He ever sent him to me, and I hope soon to see him again, and unite with him in singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.’ On

asking her how long it was since she experienced the salvation of her soul, she said, ‘Ten years; and I have been happy in God ever since, although frequently distracted with pain, and labouring under great bodily weakness.’

“ Margaret B——, a widow. She attributes her conversion to the conversations and prayers of Mr. Gate. About nine years ago, she says, she was led by him to feel her lost condition, and was directed to the Lamb of God, who took her sins away. She is about fifty-five years of age, and has been afflicted for many years. She said, ‘I shall never forget Mr. Gate’s kindness to me in many ways. He was a good man, and so useful among the poor, and if ever man went to heaven, he did.’

“ Mary L——, Friar-street. She is about seventy years of age, and has been a widow about six years, and a great sufferer for about twelve years, the greater part of which time she has been confined to her room, and has enjoyed the saving grace of God for nearly nine years. She informs me that Mr. Gate was the means, in the hand of God, of showing her the way of salvation; she was enabled to believe to the saving of her soul, and has enjoyed a sense of the pardoning mercy of God, and has been happy ever since. And she

looks a happy woman notwithstanding her poverty and pain. Sometimes after she had found peace through believing, her husband was also taken ill and was confined to his bed by an affliction that terminated in death. Mrs. L—— told him of what the Lord had done for her, and exhorted him to come to the Saviour who was ready to save him also. After they had been confined to their bed for some months, *want* added to their affliction, and they were on the point of being sold up for rent, &c., when a kind friend was raised up, who paid their rent, which was a great relief to them. To add to their joy, Mr. Gate soon after this called to see them, and, finding them in such a needy and trying situation, rendered them immediate assistance, giving them, amongst a variety of other articles, a *rug*, that was of great service to them. But whilst he was ministering to their bodily wants he did not overlook their spiritual necessities, and very soon, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, he was instrumental in bringing the *husband* to a right state of *mind* and *heart*. He pointed him, in his clear and familiar manner, to the Saviour, and he was enabled to believe to the saving of his soul. And not only was Mr. Gate rendered a blessing to Mr. and Mrs.

L—, but also to the *whole family*. One of the daughters said, ‘I shall always remember his kind and winning manner, and his affectionate conversation and fervent prayers.’ The last time that he called to see them he told them that it would be the last visit he would pay them, and, after praying with them, he bade them farewell, expressing a hope of meeting them in a better world. Not long after this they were startled by the announcement of his death, and so affected were Mrs. L— and her daughter, that they wept as if for one of their own household. And when speaking to me about him, and his acts of benevolence and pity, they again shed tears together, and said, ‘We shall never forget Mr. Gate, and his great kindness towards us. We *feel* and greatly lament our loss in his death.’”

“ Mary T— has been a widow for more than twenty years. About five years since she was ill of a fever, and—what made the case worse—she knew nothing of the saving grace of God. The Priest (literally) and Levite passed her by, being afraid of contagion. Mr. Gate, however, on hearing of her pitiable condition, conferred not with flesh and blood, but at once took up his cross and went to see her, and, like a kind and

skilful physician of both body and soul, ministered without delay to the necessities of each with the most satisfactory results. Being especially solicitous concerning her spiritual welfare, he visited her again and again, till she had been made a partaker of the pardoning love of God. She soon recovered from her illness, and continues to retain her confidence and hope, blessing God that Mr. Gate was sent to pray with her, and to show her the way to obtain the pardon of her sins, and how to live so as to please God, and to dwell at peace with her neighbours."

Since communicating the foregoing, Mr. Parkin has met with many other instances of Mr. Gate's usefulness as a visitor of the sick poor; but those already given will suffice to illustrate the kind of work in which so much of his time was spent, and the success which attended it.

Mr. Gate regularly visited the workhouse up to within about twelve months of his death, and he was blessed to the salvation of some of its inmates. One sick old woman, who was brought to God through his instrumentality, was so filled with joy on her obtaining the assurance of pardon, that she told all who came near of what a blessed change the Lord had wrought in her; and, one

day a clergyman being present, she told him of her having obtained the knowledge of forgiveness, to which he replied, that that was more than he had realized, but he would go home and think about it !

Although Mr. Gate's labours as a visitor of the sick were devoted principally to the poor, they were not confined to them ; but he was also often sent for to visit sick persons of respectability and influence, and, in many cases, was made the honoured instrument in their conversion.

The following is an extract of a letter received by Mr. Gate, in 1861, from the late Miss Taylor (afterwards Mrs. Young), daughter of the late John Taylor, Esq., M.D., Penrith :—“ I cannot conceive how I have been tempted to put off writing to you, *you* above all others, whose memory, whose kindness, can never be forgotten, so very dear, so sacred the tie which links my interest to you. My dear, my much esteemed, friend, *shall* I ever be so ungrateful as to forget what you did for my own beloved mother ; how, through your prayerful, watchful, loving care, as you were guided by the Spirit of the Lord, my own precious mother was brought to bow at the feet of Jesus, and yield her heart's warmest affec-

tions to Him? Never did the mighty change take place until you visited her—*then* began the dawning of a new and endless life, and, as visit succeeded visit, that life was more and more developed, till her life was hid with Christ in God.” “The influence of Mr. Gate’s life,” writes the Rev. Wm. Cullum, “will never be fully known until the great day of account. Embalmed in the memory of the present, his name will go down a *household word* to future generations.”

CHAPTER VII.

THE ESTEEM IN WHICH MR. GATE WAS HELD—TESTIMONIES OF THE REVS. ADAM FLETCHER, G. C. HODGSON, AND JOHN DAYMAN, M.A.—PRESENTATION AT THE JUBILEE OF THE PENRITH BRANCH OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY, AND THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN SOCIETY—A HAPPY OLD AGE—LETTER FROM MRS. PALMER (OF AMERICA)—LAST LABOURS AND RESULTS—CONFINEMENT TO THE HOUSE, AND DEATH.

NOTWITHSTANDING that Mr. Gate's piety was unostentatious, and that his numerous deeds of mercy were performed in secret, yet his consistent character and zealous labours were not unobserved by those around him; but many with secret pleasure beheld his godly walk and his good works, and were constrained to glorify God on his behalf. His name for many years was associated in the minds of all classes in the locality with whatsoever was good, having adhered to mercy and truth he found “favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man,” and his “praise was in all the churches.” The Rev. Adam Fletcher, who was associated with him in Penrith forty years ago, writes concerning him: “The remembrances of Mr. Robert Gate have always been pleasant, for

according to my judgment his was a religion of *principle* and of constant scriptural *practice*; he was a sincere lover of God and of the souls of men. Conscientious in the discharge of duty, he laboured diligently to promote the interests of Christ's cause, and to save poor sinners. And the master honoured the servant whose ways pleased Him, for His *enemies* were made to be at peace with him, and he lived (like Demetrius) to have *a good report of all men and of the truth itself*. In the commencement of his religious history, and especially of his public life and labours, he was called to endure much persecution, but *he lived it all down*, and had the pleasure of seeing his enemies become his friends, churches planted, and precious souls saved. His piety was uniformly manifested in the transactions of life, and he gained the confidence of all with whom he had to do. . . . During his lengthened life he witnessed a gracious harvest, served the best interests of large numbers, *and became respected by all.*"

The Rev. G. C. Hodgson, Vicar of Barton, writes: "The late loved and loving follower of our Lord and Saviour, Mr. Robert Gate, was indeed a bright and cheering light in our poor dark town of Penrith; his example was a daily sermon; the con-

sistency of his conduct, the meekness and quietness with which he prosecuted his earnest and self-denying labours for the good of his fellow-creatures, his largeness of heart toward all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, together with his many evangelistic labours, give him a strong claim upon the veneration and esteem and grateful remembrance of vast numbers in the locality. I had the highest opinion of him as a Christian, and justly admired his zeal in the work of the Lord.”

The Rev. John Dayman, M.A., Rector of Skelton, and co-Secretary with Mr. Gate to the Penrith Branch of the Bible Society, also writes: “Of Mr. Gate’s long and consistent course of true Christian piety and usefulness, of the respect in which he was held by *all classes* and *all denominations alike* throughout this neighbourhood, you must, I conceive, be furnished with ample evidence. We always welcomed him at our little village meetings with a hearty warmth, which was caused by the public belief that he was *eminently a living example* of the truths he delighted to press on the minds of his hearers.”

During the greater part of his Christian life, Mr. Gate was often called to endure reproach for

the sake of Christ, as men reviled him, persecuted him, and said all manner of evil against him falsely; but towards the close of his long and consistent career, he enjoyed an almost entire exemption from the evil surmisings and evil speaking of wicked men, and even the envenomed tongue of slander was almost compelled to confess, “I find no fault in him,” for he lived so far above suspicion, and the general confidence in his piety was so strong, that had evil been spoken of him it would not have been believed. At the celebration of the jubilee of the Penrith Branch of the Bible Society, the Rev. George Thompson, Incumbent of Hetheracleugh, who had known him for more than sixty years, said, with characteristic humour, that there was one portion of Scripture that he could not understand, when he thought of his old friend Mr. Gate, “Woe unto you when all men speak well of you!” But if all men spoke well of him, it was not because he had ever made any compromise with sinners, or sacrificed principle to please men, for he had avoided both evil and the appearance of evil, and his life had been as strong a protest against all sin as the doctrines he held and taught. Yet the ungodly respected him for the firmness of his principle, and his unwavering

fidelity to his religion, and they admired that very consistency of life and blamelessness of character which both condemned and reproved them; for though wicked men may entice the godly to do evil, they invariably despise those who sacrifice principle, though it be to please them.

Whilst it has been the lot of many holy and useful men to remain in ignorance as long as they lived, both of the esteem in which they were held and of the success of their labours, Mr. Gate had the satisfaction of living to see that he had been extensively useful, and that he was greatly respected and beloved by all classes, and especially by the poor and needy, and could truly say with the Patriarch, “When the ear heard me then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy.”

Mr. Gate’s piety and usefulness were publicly acknowledged at the celebration of the Jubilee of the Penrith Branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society, from the Report of which the following extracts are taken:—

“The Penrith Branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society, formed on the 1st of November, 1813, having completed the first half-century of its existence, held its Jubilee in the Assembly Room of the Crown Hotel, on Wednesday, November 4th, 1863.

“At seven o'clock, the Public Meeting commenced, presided over by E. W. Hasell, Esq., Chairman of the Cumberland and the Westmoreland Quarter Sessions, Dalemain, who was supported on his right and left by the Very Rev. the Dean of Carlisle, G. T. Edwards, Esq., Thomas Scott, Esq., J.P., the Rev. J. Dayman, M.A., Rev. G. C. Hodgson, Rev. R. Taylor, Rev. T. Brumwell, Rev. J. Tannahill, M.A., Rev. W. Brewis, Rev. A. Wood, Rev. J. Farr, and Messrs, Gate, Pattinson, Bell, Robinson, Westmoreland, &c. The room was densely crowded with lay and clerical representatives of the various religious denominations of the town and neighbourhood. A Jubilee hymn having been sung, the 19th Psalm was read by the Rev. G. C. Hodgson, Vicar of Barton, and Prayer offered by the Rev. R. Taylor, Perpetual Curate of Temple Sowerby.

“The Chairman, who, on rising to address the meeting was loudly applauded, said they had conferred upon him a great honour and high privilege by calling upon him to preside on that occasion. It was a source of considerable satisfaction to see at the end of fifty years, so large an assembly, because it showed that the object of the Society, so dear to those who were gone, was equally dear to those who had since sprung up. When the Branch was first established, one person now present, then a young man, took an active part in its formation—a man who was a most sincere Christian, and who, in his long and useful life, had been instrumental in adding to the flock of Christ

many who had listened to his good advice and sober counsel—he referred to his friend Mr. Gate—the only person left to them of those who had formed this Branch fifty years ago, and who must be delighted to see how it had progressed since then.”

After the conclusion of the Chairman’s speech, the Rev. John Dayman, M.A., Vicar of Skelton, read an address embodying an account of the formation of the Penrith Branch of the Society, and which concluded as follows :—

“ Of the members of your Committee as originally appointed there is one whose long and faithful services will in the course of this evening be publicly acknowledged. Your Committee is, for obvious reasons, prevented from expatiating on the value of those services here. Yet we cannot be wholly silent. In a day when rash presumptuous men are challenging evidence to the Bible and its promise, we would first remind you how it is written—‘ He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself,’ and then bid you verify with your own eyes that older oracle : ‘ The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.’ ”

After the Rev. George Thompson, Incumbent of Hetheracleugh, had moved, and the Rev. William Brewis, minister of the Congregational Church, Penrith, had seconded the first resolution,

“ The Chairman rose and said—A most pleasing duty now devolves upon me, as President of the Penrith Branch of the Bible Society, and that is to present to Mr. Gate, in

the name of the Committee and other friends, the handsome memorial Bible and stand now before me. You will recollect that in my opening remarks I stated that Mr. Gate, the oldest member of the Penrith Branch Bible Society, had been instrumental in its formation fifty years ago, and had been ever since its most steady and zealous supporter. Mr. Gate has been permitted to live to a very advanced age, and I believe him to be not only a most sincere Christian, but a most useful one, having been the means of instilling into many minds the sound principles of the Christian religion. Having made the Bible his peculiar study, having brought to bear upon it a good understanding and sound judgment, and above all, having, no doubt, devoutly prayed for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, there are very few who understand its teaching better. The Committee have acted most wisely in singling out so good a man, and so very old a member of the institution, for honour on this occasion, and I hope and trust that this incident in the latter part of his life will be a source of great pleasure and satisfaction to him. I know that my good friend does not look for any earthly reward ; still it is right and fitting that his good example should be held forth for the encouragement of the young to go and do likewise ; and, as should be the object of all testimonials, this is an acknowledgement of good service in a good cause. The following inscription is printed within the Bible in gold letters, and engraved upon the stand, on a silver plate :—

“ Presented to MR. ROBERT GATE,
At the Jubilee of the Penrith Branch of the
British and Foreign Bible Society,
November 4th, 1863,
As a token of gratitude for a Fifty Years’
Service of Love.”

“ Mr. GATE, who on rising to acknowledge the testimonial, was loudly cheered, said it was his duty to express his thanks to the Committee, and also to their worthy President. It became him to thank them, and if they could read his heart, they would find his thanks written there. If he spoke of himself, he should be speaking of nobody—he would therefore speak of the Bible. He could certainly recommend the Bible to the notice of every one. He never read a chapter twice over without finding something new in it. He was not a bigoted man, but he wished every one to read the Bible. It was every man’s book—a book for the illiterate and a book for the wise—a book for the clerical order and a book for the laymen, and if it were read carefully, he was convinced that it would make happy men, happy women, happy families, and happy homes, and produce a wonderful change in all our towns and cities. It would guide, under the blessing of the Holy Spirit, ‘to the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.’ If his voice and feelings could have any effect at that Jubilee, his first desire and earnest prayer to God was that all might be saved. He would recommend their every-day prayers to be put up to the Almighty for the prosperity of the cause of the Bible Society, and urge upon them the necessity of supporting it pecuniarily by the pennies saved from their daily work. ‘To see so many assembled at this Jubilee,’ added Mr. Gate, ‘as there is reason to believe, in the spirit of unity and bond of peace, gladdens my heart, and brings tears of joy to my eyes, for it furnishes good reason for supposing that something of the spirit of the Bible is existing in the town of Penrith. My friends upon the Committee, and all the company, accept of my best thanks, if you please.

May God bless you all, my friends—may God bless you all.”

The second resolution, which had been moved by the Dean of Carlisle, was seconded by G. T. Edwards, Esq., of the Parent Society, who, in referring to Mr. Gate, said:—

“ We all rejoice in the presence amongst us this evening of our venerable friend, who was on the Committee at the foundation of the Society, and who has always borne the chief burden of the work.”

The third resolution was moved by the Rev. G. C. Hodgson, Vicar of Barton—

“ Who in the course of his address, referred to the fact that about forty years ago that eminent minister the Rev. Rowland Hill preached in every town he passed through on his way to the North. At last he came to Penrith. In his journal he had written—‘ I am told it is no use to go to Penrith, there is no one there who will receive me, I hear the people are sunk in sin.’ A change had come over Penrith, of which they had evidence that night; and they had seen fit to honour the Gospel hero. Their friend had received the Order of the Sword—the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. He had heard Mr. Gate tell how he had carried his frugal meal in his pocket, and partaken of it between sermons, on the road-side, because no one would receive the ‘ Methodist’ into his house. What a change had come over the scene, and what a welcome the Rev. Rowland Hill would receive if he could now have entered that room. It spoke

volumes for Penrith to see so large a gathering upon that occasion. He congratulated them most heartily upon this Jubilee."

Mr. Gate's Christian usefulness was also publicly acknowledged at the Annual Meeting of the Penrith Good Samaritan Society, held February 17th, 1865, when he was presented with a handsome silver salver, bearing the following inscription:—

Presented by the
WESLEYAN CONGREGATIONS
Of the
Penrith Circuit,
TO
M R. R O B E R T G A T E,
As a grateful memorial of his laborious services
In various offices for nearly sixty years,
More especially as an honoured
Local Preacher,
Accompanied with believing prayer, that when
The Lord shall call him to a higher
Service "before the throne,"
He may receive from Him
Everlasting Glory.

Penrith, Feb. 17th, 1865.

The memorial cost nearly 20*l.*, which was obtained by subscriptions not exceeding one shilling each, the design of the Committee being to have a large number of subscribers, rather than large contributions. After the general business of the meeting had been gone through, the Chairman,

the Rev. Thomas T. Dilks—according to one of the local papers—proceeded to state that a number of the friends of Mr. Gate had thought that, considering the long period of service he had rendered to the Church of Christ and various philanthropic institutions, that was a fitting occasion for the recognition of those services. He then addressed the meeting upon the advantages of Lay Agency, and pointed to Mr. Gate, as a model lay agent, in the various positions he had occupied in the Church for the past sixty years, and concluded by making the presentation.

Mr. Gate having returned thanks to his friends for the kindness they had then shown him, referred to his early connection with Methodism, and concluded by saying that—

“During his service of sixty-one years for Christ, he had been impressed with the belief that nothing was too hard for love. In that time he had experienced the usual temptations and trials of the Christian life, and was deeply conscious of his own shortcomings, but he believed that throughout that period he had not stained his Christian profession by any presumptuous sin. He felt then what he felt sixty-one years ago: he was entirely dependent upon the grace of God, and that it was needful for him to put on the whole armour of God. He aimed to win the approbation of God, and *how?* By a life of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. He had no sense of merit of any kind, not even of

that special manifestation of the regard they had that evening shown to him. There was one thing that he had desired, and hoped for for many years before its accomplishment had been granted: it was the removal of the debt off the Penrith chapel, and now he felt he could lay his head upon his pillow in peace. The venerable speaker then offered his sincere thanks to the promoters of the memorial which had just been presented to him, and concluded with a fervent exhortation to any present who might not have consecrated themselves to God's service to do so at once, assuring them that it was God's will to save all who repented and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ."

After Mr. Gate had spoken, congratulatory addresses were given by representatives of the various offices in Methodism which had been held by him. The Circuit Stewards were represented by Mr. B. T. Sweeton, Local Preachers by Mr. Thomas Westmoreland, Class Leaders by Mr. John Dalton, the Good Samaritan Society by Mr. R. Simpson, the Sunday-schools by Mr. Bell, the Trustees of Chapels by Mr. John Pattinson, and the Prayer Leaders by Mr. Harrison. The Penrith Society was represented by Mr. Crone, the Penrith congregation by Mr. Daniel Turner, and the Pastorate of Methodism by the Rev. William Cullum.

Thus Mr. Gate lived to see the various sections of the Church of Christ conspire to honour him,

and for his life of devotion and deeds of mercy, he was, even in this life, rewarded openly. He found honour though he sought it not, and in endeavouring to please God, he gained also the favour of man.

His was a happy, an enviable old age; he was happy in the testimony that he *pleased God*, and in the esteem and love of all classes of men, and happy both in retrospect and prospect. He could look back with pleasure upon a long and consistent career of Christian usefulness, and although it had not been all that he could have desired, yet it had never been stained by any presumptuous sin, and he had never forsaken or lost his confidence in either his God, or the Church of his choice. If he looked back to *Scales*, the home of his childhood, he had been the means, at the beginning of his Christian life, of the conversion of his mother, sisters, brother, and perhaps of his father; further on in life he had witnessed the conversion of his children,* and had lived to see them die triumphant

* Mr. Gate had three children, the second of whom died in infancy. Hannah, the eldest, was born 27th November, 1808. She was induced by the Rev. James Millar to join the Methodist Society when she was but twelve years old, and two years afterwards she was made a subject of saving grace. Like her father, she was gentle, meek, and earnest, and after a short but bright career, she died in Jesus in the 25th year of her age. The Rev.

in the faith of Jesus; and in his old age he saw his grandchildren brought to the Lord, united to the Church, and actively engaged in its service. When he joined the Methodist Society in Penrith, it numbered less than twenty members, and there was but one chapel (Gamblesby) in what now constitutes the Penrith Circuit, but he lived to see in the town 202 members, two Sunday-schools (with 370 scholars), and a flourishing Day-school; and in the circuit 804 members and 23 Chapels besides other preaching places. Having thus

Philip Hardcastle preached her funeral sermon, and prepared a memoir of her for the press, which does not however appear to have been printed. Sarah, the third daughter, was born February 18th, 1814. She was converted through the instrumentality of Mr. Hardcastle in the nineteenth year of her age, when she united herself to the Church of Christ, of which she continued a consistent and useful member as long as she lived. She was married in 1840 to Mr. John Pattinson, an active member and office-bearer of the Wesleyan Society. Mrs. Pattinson was sensitive and timid and although she never lost her confidence, she was often assailed by doubts and fears. She took a deep interest in the welfare of the young, and taught in the Sunday School; she was kind to the poor, and liberal in the support of the Church. Her piety was deep and practical, and it enabled her to endure affliction with perfect resignation to the Divine will. After a severe and protracted illness she died in great peace, and in the full assurance of faith, August 18th, 1854, in the forty-first year of her age. She left three children behind her, all of whom are members of the Methodist Society. Soon after her death Mr. and Mrs. Gate went to live at Arthur Villa, with their son-in-law, where Mr. Gate died and where Mrs. Gate still resides.

witnessed the conversion of his father's family, and of his own children and grandchildren, and having lived to see the Church with which he was identified, and which he so ardently loved, take deep root, and spread forth her branches, the sentiment of his heart, for the latter part of his life, was that expressed in the prayer of Simeon—“Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word ; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.”

And if the happiness of his old age was enhanced by a contemplation of the *past*, how much more so by a contemplation of the *future*. What a *prospect* was his ! “They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament ; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.”

The following is an extract from a letter received by Mr. and Mrs. Gate in August, 1860, from Mrs. Phœbe Palmer, who with her husband (Dr. Palmer of America) and her son had spent five weeks at Arthur Villa, whilst holding special services in Penrith in the early part of the year.

“TO OUR BELOVED FRIENDS MR. AND MRS. GATE,

“OUR dear Brother and Sister Gate with the other beloved ones at Arthur Villa will ever be precious to

memory.... My mind often visits you, and I think of that mansion 'High on the eternal hills' of which I had been speaking to our dear Brother Gate, when the portals of the heavenly city seemed opened to my spirit's vision. I have never lost the sight since that eventful evening. It was so daguerreotyped on my heart, that ever since, my home in heaven seems to have assumed a tangibility that makes faith, indeed the 'substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.' Our dear Brother and Sister Gate will have many to welcome them to their heavenly mansion. 'Tis no small privilege that your feet were early and unitedly set in the way to Zion. And as you have been returning to 'Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon your heads,' you have been enabled to win many by the way, and also to help many halting fainting ones. How blessed to contemplate the welcome which through grace awaits you—'I was sick and ye visited Me!' What a sacred calling, to be placed in circumstances, to make it a daily employ to visit Christ in His members. And then, to anticipate the joyous welcome 'Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!' If we meet no more on the shores of time, it will make Heaven the sweeter, that we have been permitted to meet yourselves, and our many other dear Penrith friends on earth. What a blissful meeting that will be—

‘Where congregations ne’er break up
And Sabbaths never end.’”

The Rev. James Wright (now of Haslingden) writes: “I know no man in the whole circle of

my acquaintance for whom I have cherished a higher regard than for dear Mr. Gate. To me he was one of the most enviable sights upon earth ; a beautiful specimen of the ennobling character of Divine grace ; a man not selfishly grasping after the world, but literally laid upon the altar of sacrifice, spending and being spent for God. True he was a mortal standing on the edge of the grave, but he *was also a saint, ripe for glory treading on the border land of heaven.*"

Mr. Gate continued to visit daily and to preach occasionally till he had entered his eighty-seventh year, when he was compelled by increasing infirmities to cease from active labour. Up to that time he had been blessed with almost uninterrupted good health, though his strength had been gradually but scarcely perceptibly, declining for a few years. During the latter part of his life he generally rose at six o'clock in the morning in summer, and seven in winter ; spent the greater part of the forenoon in visiting ; rested an hour or two in the afternoon, and then read till five o'clock (tea time), and spent the remainder of the day in visiting, attending the services at the chapel (when there were any), and in reading, and retired again to rest at eleven. One day, about

eighteen months before his death, he returned home to dinner very much fatigued, having—as it was found out afterwards—*prayed and read a portion of Scripture fourteen times with the sick he had visited during the morning.* On another occasion a little before he had entered upon his eighty-seventh year, he returned to dinner quite faint, *having been eleven times upon his knees during his morning visitation of the sick.* “And this,” writes his son-in-law, “was no uncommon morning’s work for him to do. Climbing so many stairs was very fatiguing and injurious to him, but notwithstanding the urgent requests both of the members of our family and of his medical attendant, he would not be persuaded to relax his labours.” But the fatigue which he had to endure in consequence of his exertions in doing good, was far more than compensated by the success which followed them, for the Lord continued to bless them to the end, and he saw that his *last* labours were not in vain. He was in the town for the last time on the 15th of January, 1866 (after he had entered upon his eighty-seventh year), and either upon that occasion or a few days before, in a conversation with a brother class-leader, he expressed his wonder at the power of Divine grace, in *that thir-*

teen of the sick he was then visiting had found peace with God.

After having been actively engaged in serving the Church, and the best interests of man for sixty years, it was at the first a period of severe trial to him, when he was no longer able to go about doing good, and he felt it all the more, because, from the commencement of his confinement his sight had so far failed that he *could not read*. It was something *new* to him to be laid aside from active labour, to have to spend day after day without visiting the sick and dying: but although he was prevented by “age and feebleness extreme” from *seeing* them, they still occupied his thoughts and were remembered in his prayers, and his anxiety concerning them, and especially those he had visited, made him at times desirous, were it God’s will, to be with them again. His heart was in the work, and like a disabled soldier, he felt as deep an interest in the cause he loved, as though he were still actively engaged in it.

From the beginning of his confinement to the house, he was persuaded that his end was drawing near, and he gave himself up more than ever to a contemplation of, and a preparation for death and eternity. His reasoning faculties remained almost

unimpaired to the last, so that, although he could not read, he was able to meditate upon those blessed truths with which he was so intimately acquainted, and which were so deeply imprinted both upon his memory and heart. “During his last illness,” writes the Rev. Thos. T. Dilks, “I greatly enjoyed his conversation. His familiar recitations of portions of the Scripture and stanzas of hymns, showed how deeply his soul was imbued with holy truth; and nearly every time I conversed with him, he spoke with grateful feeling of the blessedness of God’s Word, and of our hymns, because of their fulness of Scripture truth and devout rendering of Christian experience. It was evident that his constant habit of protracted prayer and pious reading, made his life what it was—fruitful in usefulness and meet by grace for heavenly citizenship.”

The solemnity of death and the awful realities of eternity, seemed continually to stand most vividly before him, and deeply to impress his mind with the great importance of being prepared for them. He said one morning, “I AM LOOKING INTO ETERNITY,” and this expression serves to show the constant habit of his thoughts, but as he gazed upon “the wide unbounded, prospect,” his mind

though filled with awe was undisturbed by fear, for his faith in Christ never wavered, neither was his hope of heaven for a moment clouded. He had often when preaching, defined *saving faith* as being "*A sure trust in the mercy of God through Christ,*" and this sure trust to the last was his. On the Saturday evening before his death, just before going to bed, he said, "*I shall get to heaven, I have no doubt of that,* but I have not that joy that I think I ought to have." He then requested one of his granddaughters to read the 283rd hymn (Wesley's Collection), beginning—

"O God, my hope, my heavenly rest,
My all of happiness below."

He used also frequently to request her to read to him the 137th hymn—

"When shall my love constrain,
And force me to Thy breast?
When shall my soul return again
To her eternal rest?"

The love of God, the Atonement, the simplicity of the plan of salvation, and heaven, were the themes which he delighted most to dwell upon, and speak about, frequently expressing his wonder that *all* did not embrace the offer of mercy—the offer of a boon so great on terms so simple.

On the Monday night before his death, after remaining for some time apparently in deep thought, bursting into a flood of tears, he said, “*There is no salvation in any other. PRECIOUS JESUS! My REDEEMER! ALL IS RIGHT!*” and in this happy frame of mind he continued to the last. At noon on Thursday, August 9th, a little while before his death, he seemed to be earnestly engaged in prayer, and almost the last words that he was heard to articulate plainly were, “*Oh! that Townhead, Oh! that Townhead.*”* and a few moments afterwards, without a groan or a struggle, he fell asleep in Jesus. Thus, in the eighty-seventh year of his age, *he died, as he had lived, in humble reliance upon the Atonement, and manifesting the deepest interest in the welfare of the SICK POOR.*

* It may be necessary to remind the reader that the Townhead is inhabited principally by the *poor*, and that many of those whom Mr. Gate visited lived in that part of the town.

CHAPTER VIII.

GENERAL REGRET ON ACCOUNT OF MR. GATE'S DEATH—EXTRACT FROM THE PENRITH OBSERVER—FUNERAL—NOTICES OF HIS DEATH AND CHARACTER IN THE BIBLE SOCIETY'S REPORTS—RESOLUTION OF THE LEADERS' MEETING—LETTERS FROM THE REV. JOHN HANNAH AND T. T. DILKS—CHARACTER.

THE death of Mr. Gate seemed, for a time, to cast a shade over the town in which he had so long resided, and to which he had been so bright an ornament, and never perhaps was the death of one of its inhabitants so generally and so deeply lamented.

During his last illness many of the poor manifested their affection for him by frequently calling or sending to inquire after him, and some of them brought him little presents of oranges, &c., which they *hoped* he would eat for their sakes, in their poverty doing what they could to manifest their gratitude for his kindness to them; but when the passing bell announced *that he was dead*, their sorrow was too deep for utterance, and could find

vent only in *tears*. And now many of them called and asked for permission to see him, and they wept, as they gazed upon that face which had so often beamed with kindness upon them, and which even in death retained its peaceful and benevolent expression.

Amongst those who mourned their loss in his death, were some to whose homes he had been the first to convey the “good tidings of great joy,” and to whom he had been—like the Star of the East—a guide to the Saviour; some to whom he had been as an Angel of Light, imparting to them comfort in their sorrows, help in their need, and counsel and encouragment in their difficulties, and others who attributed to his instrumentality the conversion of some dear, departed friends. The Christian and Philanthropist lamented the death of such a venerable and diligent fellow-labourer, and even worldly men were sorrowful because of the removal of one whose active benevolence, self-denying labours, and blameless character, had long secured for him their admiration and esteem.

The following is an extract from the notice of his death which appeared in the *Penrith Observer*,—the representative of the Church interests in the neighbourhood:—

“ The ‘ grim destroyer ’ has just snatched from our midst one who has devoted a long life to works of practical usefulness, charity, and benevolence. Mr. Robert Gate, ripe in the fulness of years and in the affections of every class and denomination in the town of Penrith and for miles around, on Thursday last resigned his spirit into the hands of that Maker whose cause he so long, unceasingly, and laboriously advocated upon earth.

“ In the early days of Wesleyanism he joined the ranks of that body, and became one of its staunchest and most consistent supporters. Sixty years ago he raised his voice as a local preacher, and Sabbath after Sabbath travelled long distances to proclaim the glad tidings of the Gospel, in almost inaccessible localities, and in the face of innumerable difficulties. The sect adopting the opinions of Wesley was then struggling into existence. No comfortable meeting places were to be found; but few friendly welcomes for the advocates of the new creed—small in number, but sincere, determined men, animated with a conviction of the righteousness of their cause, and determined to do battle to the last against the sneers, the rudeness, and the scorn which beset them at every step. At early morning, by the mountain side, Mr. Gate frequently proclaimed the truths of the Gospel. Miles away, in the afternoon, within the walls of some humble dwelling, he met and prayed with the few gathered together; and again in the evening often he was to be found, at a considerable distance from the scene of his second labour of love, exhorting the people to walk in the narrow path that leads to eternal life.

“ Some years ago he retired from business and devoted himself entirely to the work of his Lord and Master. His

was no tinsel-Christianity. Performance followed conviction—not in outward display only, but in private acts of practical benevolence, mercy, and labours of love. As a visitor to the sick he was indefatigable, and by the ‘crumbs of comfort’ which he so well knew how to administer, the thorn has been taken from beneath many a dying man’s pillow. The widow and the orphan, the unfortunate and the needy, were the objects of his special regard, and as almoner of the Good Samaritan Society, or from his private resources, he was at all times ready to relieve their physical necessities. . . . Though not able, through declining years, so actively to perform the duties which he had undertaken, up to within the last twelve months, his venerable person was frequently seen in the homes of the sick and the needy, administering words of consolation and of hope, or dispensing substantial relief. His infirmities, however, gradually increased, and for some months past it was clear his earthly career was drawing to a close. As we have already stated, the venerable gentleman breathed his last on Thursday.

“ In all the relations of life Mr. Gate was highly esteemed. Though a Wesleyan of the true stamp, he was no bigot, but always ready to lend a helping hand in every good work, by whomsoever inaugurated. He thus won for himself the respect and confidence of all with whom he became associated. The void caused by his death will be difficult to fill. In reference to Mr. Gate the words of the poet aptly apply—

‘ How poorly eloquence of words
Translates the tenderness of hearts like his.’ ”

The funeral, which took place on Wednesday,

August 15th, was attended by a large concourse of sincere mourners, representing all classes and denominations in the town and neighbourhood, many of whom were deeply affected. The solemn but comforting “Order for the Burial of the Dead” was read by the Rev. S. J. Butler, Vicar of the parish, and the Rev. G. C. Hodgson, of Barton, Rural Dean, and many in that large assembly were struck with the appropriateness to Mr. Gate’s case of the words, “*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; even so saith the Spirit, FOR THEY REST FROM THEIR LABOURS.*”

Funeral sermons were preached in the Sandgate Head Wesleyan Chapel, by the Rev. Thomas Ratcliffe; in the Congregational Chapel, by the Rev. William Brewis, and in the Primitive Methodist Chapel, by the Rev. W. R. Widdowson, and sketches of his life and labours appeared in the local and other newspapers.

On hearing of the death of Mr. Gate, G. T. Edwards, Esq., one of the District Secretaries of the *British and Foreign Bible Society*, in a letter of condolence to Mr. Pattinson, says: “I have heard with deep regret of the departure of my dear old friend, your father-in-law, though the regret is for ourselves, not for him. He has gone to be with

his Lord, having finished his course and kept the faith. What a bright example he leaves behind him ! And what a firm and constant friend the Bible Society has lost ! May we be enabled to follow him as he followed Christ."

The following notice of Mr. Gate's death, from the pen of Mr. Edwards, appeared in the *Monthly Reporter* of the Bible Society :—

" During March I visited the Associations of Cumberland and Durham, and attended the anniversary of the Penrith Auxiliary, which has just sustained a heavy loss in the death of its Secretary, Mr. Robert Gate. He was one of the oldest friends of the Bible Society in the North of England, and very few have done more to advance its interests. More than half a century ago he was accustomed to go out on horseback, and collect for the Society all round Penrith ; and, during that long period, he has acted as a member of the Committee, or as Secretary to the Auxiliary. Till within a year of his death, though bending under the weight of more than fourscore years, he was in the habit of accompanying me to most of the Association meetings in the district, where his warm and hearty advocacy of the Society he loved so well was always most acceptable. I shall ever remember with grateful feelings the valuable and cheerful aid I received from him during the course of many years, while the blameless life, the Christian courtesy, and the zealous, self-denying labours of this devoted servant of Christ, will live long in the recollection of all who were privileged to know him."

The Report of the Penrith Auxiliary of the Bible Society for the year 1867, which was read by the Rev. John Dayman, M.A., Rector of Skelton, at the annual meeting, concluded as follows:—

“ But we are recalled to the solemn contemplation of matters nearer home, by having sorrowfully to record a loss in which this meeting—indeed every lover of scriptural truth among us, every admirer of consistent Christian perseverance—will deeply sympathise. Only a few brief months have gone by since a venerable form, something bowed by age, yet retaining much of the animation, and all the cheerfulness, of earlier life, might be seen threading the streets and lanes of Penrith, Bible in hand, to carry to the bedside of the sick and dying precious tidings of Him who ‘ speaketh in righteousness, mighty to save ;’ bringing balm to the awakened conscience, strength to the fainting spirit, and words of wholesome warning, and wise counsel, to all that would listen. But, full of years and of the truest honour, our dear friend and associate in this good work, ROBERT GATE, has been taken to his rest. To speak more of the general respect and esteem in which he was held, would be superfluous before an audience composed of his fellow-townsmen, eye-witnesses to so long a career of patient, unobtrusive well-doing. But your Committee, in proposing to you the name of Mr. JOHN PATTINSON, as Mr. GATE’s successor in the office of local secretary to this Auxiliary, can desire nothing better for him individually, or the collective body which he will have to represent, than that he may keep ever before him the bright example of his lamented predecessor.”

At the first meeting, after the death of Mr. Gate, of the Committee of the Penrith Auxiliary of the Bible Society, the Rev. John Tannahill in the chair, the following record was entered in their Minutes:—

“ The Committee cannot separate on this occasion without recording in their Minutes the serious loss they have sustained through the removal by death of one of their secretaries, Mr. ROBERT GATE, who had been officially connected with their Branch (now Auxiliary) from its formation in the year 1813—a period of more than fifty years.

“ Our greatly beloved and lamented friend was an earnest supporter of various philanthropic and religious movements, both for local and distant objects, but he took a special interest in the *British and Foreign Bible Society*. For many years—up to a short time before his death—he attended the annual meetings of the village associations in our neighbourhood. In all the preliminary arrangements his zeal was most exemplary, and his punctuality in attendance most remarkable. Whatever he said, whether much or little, was well received, being pertinent and impressive. Indeed, his very presence there seemed a considerable item in the interest they so long maintained, and when at length he could no longer attend them, like David, the son of Jesse, he was missed (his seat being empty) and a serious void was felt.

“ Our departed friend was marked by *great simplicity and transparency of character, and by his loving and liberal spirit, towards all who gave evidence of attachment to the Divine Master.* He had, without doubt, his conscientious

preferences for that section of the Church to which he belonged, and which he had so long served and adorned, but still he seemed to be more the property of the general Church than of any of its particular branches. He took the liveliest interest in the welfare of the *poor*, especially of the *sick poor*, whom for years he was in the habit of visiting, to impart both temporal relief and spiritual instruction. *He was eminently distinguished by a devout spirit.* Everything he did was sanctified by the Word of God and prayer. Whilst no one laboured more *personally*, laying himself out for the good of others; no one worked more *prayerfully* under the deep conviction that neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but *God that giveth the increase.*

“When shall we see his like again? One so devoted to the Lord’s work and man’s welfare—one whose sole business it was, his very meat and drink, to go about doing good both to the souls and bodies of his fellow-creatures—one whose consistency of character was so generally acknowledged, and whose sympathy with suffering humanity was so fully appreciated by all classes of the community!

“*He was never known to speak detractively.* His was the charity that rejoiced not in iniquity, but rejoiced in the truth. On his lips was the law of kindness, and whilst he could not but deplore the prevalency of evil, whether in the profane world or the professing Church, his feeling was more allied to grief than anger; he hated the sin, but pitied and prayed for the sinner.

“*There was about his friendship an invariability* which strikingly contrasted with the fickleness and changeableness of many, who yet profess to be the imitators of that

Friend who loveth at all times, and sticketh closer than a brother.

“ We feel his removal more than words can express, and only pray that his mantle may fall on us, and that at the close of our work below we may be privileged to meet him again in that blest world where all is *light*, as well as *love*, and where the fellowship commenced and cherished in the transitory state will be for ever perpetuated and perfected.”

The following is a copy of the Resolution of the Penrith Wesleyan Leaders’ Meeting, on Mr. Gate’s death :—

“ This meeting desires to make affectionate record of the decease of its most venerable member, Mr. Robert Gate, who peacefully entered into the rest of the people of God, on August 9th, aged eighty-six years ; and also its deep and grateful sense of his unwearied diligence in the discharge of his duties as a class leader of the Penrith Society for so many years. His works do follow him.”

The Rev. John Hannah (now of Shrewsbury), who was intimately acquainted with Mr. Gate for three years, writes :—“ I was not surprised to find, from the newspapers, that so much respect was paid to Mr. Gate’s memory. He was a truly good man, ‘ blameless and harmless,’ and, at the same time, remarkably active in doing good. There were two features of his character which struck me when I knew him, and which now stand out.

very prominently in my recollection of him. *First, the quiet and unostentatious manner* in which he went about doing good. The good he did, especially in visiting and relieving the sick and the poor, has been more manifest (I have no doubt) since his death than it was even during his active life. His apparent *unconsciousness* of the great good he was doing was, to my mind, a most lovely feature of his character. Then, he was one of the most *uncensorious* men I ever met with. I never heard him utter an unkind word respecting any one. He seemed to be pre-eminently ‘meek and lowly in heart.’”

The Rev. Thos. T. Dilks (now of Ashton-under-Lyne), who visited Mr. Gate during his illness, writes concerning him:—“I have joined in the mourning for him who, though like a shock of corn fully ripe, has passed away, so much regretted, from our Church militant, where he had distinguished himself in a long fight with the Wicked One and his emissaries. God has taken him to his rest and reward—rest from all his afflictions, and reward for all his toils. How many whom he taught to triumph over death, in his diligent visitation of the sick, will bless him in heaven; how many whom he warned to flee from the wrath

to come, during his ministry of the Word of life in our wide, and once wider, circuit, will hail him as their guide to immortal blessedness ! He is now supremely happy with God, and his dear kindred who ‘went before.’ *His works will follow him till the final gathering of the Lord’s harvest.* . . . His sphere was not, in a worldly sense, great, but *he was great in his sphere.* He was so wise as to take his allotted place *without presumption*, yet so humble as to maintain it *without pretension*, and so resolute as to pursue his long and difficult course of duty and sacrifice without shrinking or relenting. His was a healthy nature, blunt and brave, yet reverential and tender-hearted. Thus he was well qualified to serve God faithfully, and win the *warm admiration and gratitude of two generations in his neighbourhood.* After my appointment to the Penrith Circuit, he rendered comparatively little service, excepting his much-cherished visiting of the poor and sick, and class-leading ; but I was privileged to observe, as he slowly diminished the breadth of his daily labours, that he constantly testified his strong affection for, and persistent devotedness to, his duty.”

The writer has before him several other communications, bearing testimony to the piety, Chris-

tian zeal, and usefulness of Mr. Gate, and to the high esteem in which he was held by all classes ; but to insert them would be but to give what has already, in substance, been given ; and nothing more need be said to show that his character and labours are worthy the imitation of all men, and that he may indeed be numbered amongst those “*who through faith and patience inherit the promises,*” and of whom we are exhorted to be “*followers.*”

In glancing at the life of Mr. Gate, we may notice—for the *purpose of imitating*—the principal features of his character and labours, bearing in mind that, *without his labours*, he would have been comparatively useless ; and that *his labours, without his character*, would have been worthless ; and that his usefulness and honour were the *result of the union of the two.*

He was diligent in business, and upright and honourable in all his transactions ; in his FRIENDSHIP he was true, faithful, and constant ; in his CONVERSATION, sober, truthful, and charitable ; in his TEMPER, even, forbearing, and forgiving ; in his DISPOSITION, gentle, benevolent, and sympathizing ; in his SPIRIT, humble, fervent, and devout ; in his PROFESSION OF RELIGION, unassuming, sincere,

and consistent ; in his LABOURS, diligent, self-denying, and unostentatious ; and he deeply reverenced and loved the BIBLE, the SABBATH, and the SANCTUARY.

In connection with his LABOURS it is worthy of notice :—

First. That his long career of Christian usefulness was commenced at HOME. He first preached to those who had the best opportunity for observing his spirit and practice : “ and they took knowledge of him that he had been with Jesus.” By putting forth his first efforts to save the members of his father’s house, he manifested his *affection for them, and his conviction of the importance of religion* ; his conduct in this respect being a pleasing contrast to the inconsistency of such as are willing to preach anywhere but at *home*, and to attend to the spiritual interests of any rather than those of *their own household*.

Secondly. That he endeavoured to do good, as he HAD OPPORTUNITY, TO ALL MEN. And this accounts, in a great measure, for his extensive usefulness. He was not endowed with many talents ; he was neither learned nor rich ; his social position was not high ; neither were his intellectual powers extraordinary : his usefulness, then, was the result, not of the possession of great talents, but of

the diligent and almost unceasing employment of such as he had, of improving every opportunity for doing good, and of “ALWAYS ABOUNDING in the work of the Lord.”

And, thirdly. That in all his labours he DEPENDED SOLELY UPON THE BLESSING OF GOD FOR SUCCESS. He never lost sight of the fact, that in doing good man can be but an *instrument*,—the power being Divine; and few men have relied *less upon self*, and *more upon God*, than he. His labours were ever accompanied by earnest prayer for the guidance of God in them, and for his blessing upon them.

To conclude—in the words of Mr. Dilks—“The great lesson of his venerable life, to us who remain, seems to be—*Fill contentedly thine allotted sphere, with a good and ever-growing life of sincere and humble, constant and courageous labour; and God shall make thee beautiful, and fruitful as the palm-tree, and stedfast as the cedar of Lebanon. Then, estimated by the rule of God and holy angels, thou shalt have thy lot among THE TRULY GREAT for evermore.*”

A P P E N D I X.

List of Places in the BROUgH CIRCUIT with their Contributions to the Quarter Board for the Christmas Quarter 1803 (the year of its formation) and the Midsummer Quarter, 1806.

	1803.	1806.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Brough	1 12 6	2 6 6
Stainmore	1 1 6	1 8 0
Bleatarn	0 5 6	—
Asby	0 10 0	0 10 0
Appleby	1 1 0	0 12 0
Dufton	0 15 6	0 13 0
Longmarton	0 14 0	0 19 6
Kirby Thore	0 18 0	1 0 0
Bolton	0 4 6	0 9 0
*Morland	1 16 0	1 17 0
*Little Strickland	0 4 0	0 9 0
Penrith	0 15 0	1 6 2
*Gamblesby	1 5 0	1 0 0
*Renwick	0 12 0	0 14 6
*Skirwith	0 10 0	0 10 6
Kirkby Stephen	—	0 7 2
Warcop and Bleatarn	—	0 19 1
Stainton	—	0 10 0
Woodhouse	—	0 14 0
Keswick	—	0 6 0
Gaisgillrow	—	0 8 0
Orton	—	0 3 0
Murton	—	0 6 6
<hr/>		
	£12 4 6	£17 8 11
<hr/> <hr/>		

Although Penruddock does not appear in the Circuit Accounts for *this* quarter, it contributed 1*l.* 19*s.* for the preceding and 5*s.* 8*d.* for the succeeding quarter.

The places in the foregoing list marked with an asterisk (*). remained in the *Brough Circuit* up to the year 1818, and in the *Brough and Penrith Circuit* during their union from 1818 to 1824, but since then they have formed part of the *Penrith Circuit*.

When the Penrith Circuit was formed (1806), having taken with it but three places (Keswick, Penruddock, and Stainton) from Brough, its work was almost entirely *missionary*—the breaking up fresh ground and forming new societies. Besides adjacent villages it included distant places that now form part of other circuits—Keswick, Bassenthwaite, Ireby, Skeugh, Hesket New Market, Caldbeck, Dalston, Warwick Bridge, &c. For the first four years of its existence the Circuit had two ministers, who used alternately to spend a fortnight in the town and neighbouring villages, and a fortnight in the more distant parts of the Circuit, preaching in the open air, and wherever they could find an open door. In 1809 the Circuit received a *grant* of 55*l.* 5*s.* from the Contingent Fund, but in the following year only *one* minister was appointed to it. In 1811, in addition to their regular minister, a *missionary* was appointed to labour in the Circuit for one year. The following, which is a copy of a plan of the work of the *Missionary*, dated July, 1812, will, undoubtedly, be of in-

terest to many in the Circuit. It may be necessary to say, by way of explanation, that when this plan was made, it was expected that the Missionary would have been appointed for another year:—

“ August 18, Tuesday. Penrith, prayer meeting.

„ 19, Wednesday. Yanwath (Stay at the house of) Mr. Richardson.

„ 20, Thursday. Penrith, preach.

„ 21, Friday. Eamont Bridge.

„ 22, Saturday. Scales, Mr. Joseph Gate. Rest.

„ 23, Sunday. Wallthwaite in ye morning, and Keswick afternoon and evening, Mr. Jacob Banks.

„ 24, Monday. Thornthwaite, Mrs. Betty Vickers.

„ 25, Tuesday. Keswick, take victuals at Miss Evans's and sleep at Mr. Jacob Banks's.

„ 26, Wednesday. Millbeck, Mr. Wm. Plaskitt, return to Keswick to sleep.

„ 27, Thursday. Forge, near Keswick, return to Keswick to sleep.

„ 28, Friday. Legbothwaite, John Camm.

„ 29, Saturday. Hutton Skeugh, near Hesket New Market, Mr. Wood. Rest.

„ 30, Sunday. Rest in ye morning, preach in ye afternoon at Mr. Wood's, and at Caldbeck in ye evening, return to Mr. Wood's to sleep.

„ 31, Monday. Welton, Mr. Chambers.

September 1, Tuesday. Thomas-close, unbroken up.

„ 2, Wednesday. Lazonby, Mr. Joseph James, not go till tea.

„ 3, Thursday. Longwathby, Mr. Thomas Matthews, dine.

September 4, Friday. Eamont Bridge.

- „ 5, Saturday. Penrith, rest.
- „ 6, Sunday. Penrith in ye morning, Pooley in ye afternoon, and Penrith in ye evening.
- „ 7, Monday. Newton, Mr. John Redhead.
- „ 8, Tuesday. Penrith, prayer meeting.
- „ 9, Wednesday. Stainton, Mr. John Thompson.
- „ 10, Thursday. Penrith, preach.
- „ 11, Friday. Tirril, Mr. Thomas Bewsher.
- „ 12, Saturday. Penrith, rest.
- „ 13, Sunday. Penrith, preach in ye morning, afternoon and evening.
- „ 14, Monday. Laithes, Mr. Gowling, and return to Newton to sleep.
- „ 15, Tuesday. Penrith, prayer meeting.
- „ 16, Wednesday. Yanwath, Mr. John Richardson, &c."

After having had but one minister in 1812 and 1813, Penrith, in 1814, had again two ministers, and has never since retrenched.

List of Places included in the BROUGH AND PENRITH CIRCUIT, with their Contributions to the Quarter Board for the March Quarter, 1818:—

	£	s.	d.
Brough	3	14	0
Penrith	7	5	0
Kirkby Stephen	2	8	3
Orton	1	2	9
Morland	3	4	6
Long Marton	1	19	4
Kirby Thore	1	4	6
Temple Sowerby	0	12	5
Gamblesby	2	8	11½
Renwick	3	17	11
Skirwith	1	4	6
Dufton	2	11	4½
Murton	2	12	1
Bolton	1	7	6
Newbiggin	0	4	6
Crackenthorpe	0	17	4
Kirkoswald	0	12	7
Crosby	0	13	0
Clifton	0	8	0
Culgaith	1	0	9
Warcop	1	0	6
Nateby	0	10	5
Total	£	41	0 2

When Penrith was reunited to Brough, Keswick and adjacent places were united to the Wigton Circuit, and Dalston, Warwick Bridge, &c., to Carlisle.

The quarterly meetings of the *Brough and Penrith Circuit* were held in various places—Bolton, Morland, Crackenthorpe, Potts, Lowgill, &c.

List of Places in the PENRITH CIRCUIT, with their Contributions to the Quarter Board, and number of members for the June Quarters—1826, 1846, and 1866:—

	1826.			1846.			1866.					
	Mems.	£	s.	d.	Mems.	£	s.	d.	Mems.	£	s.	d.
Penrith	95	11	11	6	151	19	3	8½	202	39	8	2½
Gambley	13	2	4	3½	36	3	15	4	23	2	14	2
Kirkoswald	44	3	10	1½	35	2	5	9	49	4	5	1½
Renwick	45	4	13	9	43	3	3	1	35	3	13	2½
Skirwith	14	1	5	11	19	1	19	6	24	2	6	3
Temple Sowerby	7	1	5	7	28	2	0	7½	13	2	1	0
Morland	20	1	13	8	14	1	6	6	14	1	6	4½
Cliburn	10	1	2	1	13	1	2	10	12	1	7	8½
Hunsonby	25	2	1	0	28	2	13	3	38	2	10	1½
Culgairth	16	1	9	10	44	3	9	6	22	3	1	4
Salkeld Dykes	11	1	3	5	20	2	5	2	26	3	17	3
Melkynthorpe	11	0	7	6	Dropped			.....			
Pooley, (afterwards Beauthorn)	7	0	7	0	18	4	6	0½	Dropped			
Tirril	6	0	8	0	Dropped			.....			
Newbiggin Fell Side	9	0	11	4½	16	1	10	2½	11	1	0	1
Great Strickland .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	10	0	10	6½
Croglan	7	0	15	9	3	0	4	6	3	0	3	8
Meimerby	3	0	8	7	11	0	15	0	10	0	18	6
Newton	4	0	6	9	Dropped			.....			
Plumpton .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	5	0	10	0	8	1	2	8½
Eamont Bridge .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Dropped			.....			
Askham .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	10	1	5	4	.....		
Ainstable	0	3	2	.....	18	1	11	6	24	2	18	0
Clifton .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	15	1	6	0	7	1	3	4
Lazonby .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	14	1	8	8	35	3	7	3
Ousby .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	16	1	9	9	28	2	14	1½
Hutton End, &c. ....	.....	.....	.....	.....	6	0	18	0	21	3	6	2
Longwathby .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	9	0	14	7	5	0	7	6
Glassonby .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	14	0	16	0	13	1	6	0
Newby .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	22	2	1	4	18	1	6	6½
Penudock .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	14	1	12	1	14	1	8	6
Newbiggin and Dacre .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	24	2	3	2	14	2	0	0
Newbiggin, Westmoreland .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	11	0	16	2	11	1	1	6
Helton .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	0	2	6	10	1	1	1
Matterdale .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	51	3	2	1	29	2	0	7
Patterdale .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	33	3	13	0	28	2	19	11
Sparket .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	11	0	15	9	Dropped			
Shap .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	13	2	2	8	13	1	13	0
Arnthwaite .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	0	8	9	{ Included in Ainstable. }			
Stainton .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	4	0	8	6	.....	0	6	0½
Blencowe .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	7	1	0	7½
Beauthorn .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	19	8	12	2
Total	347	£35	19	1½	769	£77	6	10	801	£108	18	7

The places in the foregoing list from Penrith to Lazenby inclusive, were on the Circuit Plan in 1826, and the following is the list of the preachers for that year:—

1. H. STEVENSON.	9. <i>E. Idel.</i>
2. R. THOMPSON.	10. <i>E. Saint.</i>
3. <i>J. Brownrigg.</i>	11. <i>R. Alston.</i>
4. <i>J. Lowthian.</i>	12. <i>T. Lowthian.</i>
5. <i>W. Gowling.</i>	13. <i>J. Lowthian.</i>
6. <i>R. Gate.</i>	14. <i>T. Cartmel.</i>
7. <i>J. Watson.</i>	15. <i>J. Talentire.</i>
8. <i>H. Moses.</i>	

At the June Quarterly Meeting for the same year there was a deficiency, which was there and then made up as follows: Robert Alston, 5s. ; T. Robinson, 1s. ; John Benson, 10s ; Mr. Hall, 10s. ; Robert Gate, 15s. ; H. Moses, 2s. ; T. Lowthian, 30s. ; N. Redhead, 5s. ; Rev. H. Stevenson, 5s. ; John Lawson, 5s. ; Edward Saint, 1s., and J. Brownrigg, 10s.

A list of the Wesleyan Ministers who have been appointed to the PENRITH CIRCUIT from its formation in 1806 to the year 1866.

E signifies the year of entrance upon the ministry, D year of death, and * those who have ceased to be recognised as Wesleyan ministers.

- 1806-7. Arthur Hutchinson (E 1794, D 1834).
- ,, Benjamin Millman (E 1803, D 1836).
- 1808. John Draper (E 1802, D 1829).
- ,, Benjamin Barrit (E 1807, D 1839).
- 1809. Robert Dall (E 1772, D 1828).
- ,, George Willoughby (*).
- 1810. William Beswick (*).
- 1811. John Gill (E 1806, D 1837).
- ,, Joseph Hutton (Missionary, E 1811, D 1861).
- 1812. Samuel Kellett (E 1811, D 1831).
- 1813. George Douglas (E 1793, D 1853).
- 1814. Joseph Frank (E 1808, D 1857).
- ,, James Jarrett (E 1814).
- 1815. Joseph Frank, Arthur Hutchinson.
- 1816. Arthur Hutchinson, Robert Watkin (*).
- 1817. A. Hutchinson, Jno. Rawson (E 1808, D 1850).
- 1818. Chas. L. Adshead (E 1810, D 1861).
- ,, James Miller (E 1812, D 1853).
- ,, Wm. Blundell (E 1812, D 1860).

1819-20. John Rawson, James Miller.
„ Hodgson Casson (E 1815, D 1851).
1821. Wm. Scholefield (E 1803, D 1838).
„ George Clarke (E 1812, D 1857).
„ John Lewis (E 1814, D 1866).
1822. Wm. Scholefield George, Clarke. |
„ John Brandreth (E 1821, D 1859).
1823. Isaac Clayton (E 1801, D 1833).
„ Anthony Triffit (E 1804, D 1853).
„ Wm. Shackleton (E 1812).
1824. Isaac Clayton, Wm. Todd (E 1804, D 1830).
„ Wm. Shackleton.
1825. Humphrey Stevenson (E 1807).
„ Robt. Thompson (E 1825, D 1868).
1826. Wm. Levell (E 1812, D 1862).
„ Robt. Thompson.
1827. Wm. Levell, Joseph Forsyth, (*).
1828. David Deakins (*).
„ Adam Fletcher (E 1825).
1829. Joseph Lowthian (E 1822), A. Fletcher.
1830-2. James Fowler (E 1812, D 1867).
„ Philip Hardcastle (E 1829, D 1864).
1833. Benjamin Barrett, Jas. Lemmon (E 1827).
1834. Benj. Barrett, Edmund B. Warters (E 1834).
1835. Benj. Barrett, Jos. Moorhouse (E 1833).
1836. Wm. Huddlestorne (E 1822, D 1862), J. Moorhouse.
1837-8. Wm. Huddlestorne, Wm. Stevenson (E 1835).
1839-40. Joseph Burgess (E 1812, D 1859).
„ Michael Johnson (E 1838).
1841-2. Josiah Hudson (E 1829, D 1859).
„ Timothy R. Moxon (E 1839).

1843. J. Hudson, T. R. Moxon.
 ,, Jas. Harris, Penruddock (E 1836).
 1844. Saml. Rowe (E 1826).
 ,, Chas. B. Ritchie (E 1840), Jas. Harris.
 1845. Saml. Rowe, George Russell (E 1837).
 ,, Charles B. Ritchie.
 1846-7. Thos. D. Baines (E 1834, D 1866).
 ,, Geo. Russell, Stephen P. Howard (E 1845).
 1848. Thos. D. Baines, Alfred Lockyer (E 1839).
 ,, Robt. A. Gent (*).
 1849. Wm. Simpson (E 1829), A. Lockyer.
 ,, Robt. Horsfield (*).
 1850. Wm. Simpson, Wm. Shearman (E 1838).
 ,, T. G. Horton (*).
 1851-2. Wm. Shearman, Chas. Nightingale (E 1839).
 ,, Robt. Stephenson, B. A. (E. 1851).
 1853. Geo. Hughes (E 1836), C. Nightingale.
 ,, Wm. W. Duke (E 1851).
 1854. Geo. Hughes, Jno. I. Dredge (*).
 ,, Wm. W. Duke.
 1855. Jno. Hannah (E 1829), Geo. Patterson (1839).
 ,, Richd. Martin (E 1846).
 1856. Jno. Hannah, Geo. Patterson.
 ,, Richd. A. Tindall (*).
 1857. Jno. Hannah, Geo. Patterson.
 ,, James Moorhouse (*).
 1858, 9, 60 Geo. Greenwood (E 1837, D 1865),
 ,, J. W. Thomas (E 1822) Jas. Wright (E 1857).
 1861, 2, 3 Thos. Brumwell (E 1838), Abel Wood (E 1855),
 ,, Geo. G. S. Thomas (E 1860).
 1864-5. Thos. T. Dilks (E 1847), Thos. Ratcliffe (E 1855).

1864-5. Wm. Cullum (E 1862).
1866. Thos. T. Dilks, Thos. Ratcliffe.
,, John C. Stuart (1866).
,, John Macmillan *).

THE END.

